



MARTIAL WORLD

BOOK 04

Cocooned Cow

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Martial World

(Wuji Tianxia)

(武极天下)

by

Cocooned Cow

(蚕茧里的牛)

Synopsis

In the Realm of the Gods, countless legends fought over a mysterious cube. However, after the battle it disappeared into the void. Lin Ming stumbles upon this mysterious cube and begins his journey to become the hero of the land.

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Chapter 301 – Triumphant Return to the Nation

As Lin Ming rode atop Little Flame's back, he could feel a heat wave flowing into himself, supplementing the Fire origin energy within his body. This caused Lin Ming to be secretly surprised. Indeed, Little Flame was worthy of being called a Saint Beast, it could actually absorb the power of fire origin energy from the world and then continuously boost whoever it wished to.

If Mu Qianyu ever engaged in battle, even if Little Flame didn't attack, it would still be a great assistance to Mu Qianyu.

If Little Flame grew up and reached the Revolving Core boundary, then combined with Mu Qianyu, it would be even more incredible.

The Vermillion Bird soared into the sky, a scorching wind blowing past them. Liu Xuan narrowed his eyes as he watched Lin Ming and Mu Qianyu vanish into the sky. Liu Xuan couldn't help but whisper in his heart, just what sort of relationship did Mu Qianyu and Lin Ming have?

If it was only an ordinary relationship, then Mu Qianyu would never allow Lin Ming to ride her life's Vermillion Bird with her...

As Liu Xuan thought this, he had the good grace to not speak his mind. He only secretly regretted not taking advantage of talking to Lin Ming to befriend him.

Mu Qianyu deliberately didn't reveal her relationship with Lin Ming in front of an audience. In turn, she also didn't need to hide it.

As they flew on the back of Little Flame, Mu Qianyu said, "That senior lives in seclusion in a distant mountain. Even if we take transmission arrays to reach him, we still have to travel several hundred thousand miles. If we rode Heavenly Wind Eagles, the trip might take two months, but with Little Flame, it will only take a week.

Lin Ming nodded, and then said, "I do not have the materials to forge a spearhead."

"Mm, I know. But the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island have the right to exchange top quality pills, treasures, or materials with the sect in exchange for some sect contribution points..."

Lin Ming forced a smile and said, "I don't have any sect contribution points..."

If Lin Ming could be said to have any contribution towards Divine Phoenix Island, that would be that he helped rescue Mu Qianyu a few months ago. Of course, the truth was that he hadn't saved her, this was just Lin Ming's thoughts. Mu Qianyu hadn't been in a life threatening situation, and had only suffered a tremendous pain. At that time, Mu Qianyu had also helped Lin Ming absorb the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder as exchange. Their debts could be considered paid.

“Yes, you don’t have any, but...” As Mu Qianyu spoke, she turned a crafty and teasing smile towards Lin Ming and blinked her large eyes, “I might allow you to purchase some items on credit, and then you can pay it back later.”

This was the so-called smile that was worth a hundred lives. Seeing this playful rare demeanor of a most beautiful maiden openly displayed in front of him, Lin Ming was frozen in shock for some time.

Exchange items for sect contribution points on credit... although Lin Ming didn’t understand the internal system of Divine Phoenix Island, he was well aware of just how valuable a material the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo was, something that the Thunder Flood Dragon held in high regard. A material that would be equal in value to Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo would be something amazing that would inevitably be able to stir the heart of an extreme Xiantian master.

The amount of sect contribution points that would be needed to exchange for this degree of treasure material could be imagined. He would need to be at least a Xiantian master to obtain these points.

He was only a disciple at the early Pulse Condensation period, where would he ever find the strength to repay this debt?

In his final estimate, Mu Qianyu was helping him from the kindness of her heart. This benevolence was truly sincere.

Lin Ming secretly recorded this kindness in his heart. One day, in the future, he would surely be able to return this favor.

.....

Several hundred thousand miles away, Sky Fortune Kingdom –

After the Total Faction Martial Meeting concluded, Qin Ziya, Ling Sen, Sun Youdao, Qin Xingxuan, as well as Zhou Yu and Liang Long from the four martial families, rode a group of Heavenly Wind Eagles to return to Sky Fortune Kingdom.

Qin Xingxuan had already been chosen as an inner court disciple. As soon as she turned 16 years old, she could enter the Seven Profound Valleys and become a Sword Faction disciple.

As for Ling Sen, although he had comprehended a Slaughter Domain and his result was in the top 100, he was still limited by the gap in his age and cultivation. He was only chosen as an outer court disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys.

If one looked down with a bird’s eye view at Sky Fortune City’s Seven Profound Martial House, one could see that the entire Seven Profound Marital House was packed to the brim with festive decorations, it was just like a new year’s celebration. A bustling and happy crowd had gathered in the square, waiting to greet Qin Ziya and his group.

All the disciples of the Seven Profound Martial House had gathered here, including the important nobles of Sky Fortune City and other martial arts masters.

Everyone in Sky Fortune City who was at least at the Pulse Condensation period had come today. Even Marshal Qin Xiao had personally arrived, and three of the ten Great Generals of Sky Fortune Kingdom had arrived. As for the others, they were preoccupied with military affairs so they could not attend.

Crown Prince Yang Lin naturally wasn't absent. He wore a thick purple gold cloak, and a gold crown was resting atop his head. He had a very fierce appearance as he sat on a tiger fur chair, his eyes closed in thought.

The truth was, although Yang Lin appeared tranquil, he was far from calm. During this half month, he had practically lived at the Seven Profound Martial House, not even stepping out once.

He had been waiting for news. Waiting, waiting, waiting until he had difficulty sleeping during the night or the day.

During this time period, the Seven Profound Martial House had only used the long-distance sound transmission array once. Afterwards, it did not shine again. This was because the activation cost of the array formation was too great. It wasn't just about the cost of true essence stones, but more so the longevity of the array formation. No one within the Seven Profound Martial House was qualified or had the ability to construct a long-distance sound transmission array that could span several hundred thousand miles. Once the sound transmission array was worn out, they

would have to invite a master from the Seven Profound Valleys' Array Faction, and pay a great price and favor in order to repair it. This was simply a very troublesome task.

Therefore, even though the Total Faction Martial Meeting had finished and the results were complete, there was no necessity to send news through the transmission array. They only needed to wait for Qin Ziya to return and personally announce the news.

Snow floated in the sky, fluttering down. The winter was particularly cold, and the snow didn't melt, layer upon layer of white snow blankets stacking upon each other.

The clouds were thick, even the sunlight didn't peek through. The cold wind was chilling to the bone. Everyone had been waiting in the snow for almost an hour, but there was not a single one who dared to show an ounce of impatience. To martial artists, especially those in the army like the generals, the disparity of strength was what decided disparity in status. Qin Ziya's strength was enough for them all to respectfully wait here, without uttering a single complaint.

As for the nobles, they had to stay for Crown Prince Yang Lin. Everyone knew just what the results for this year's Total Faction Martial Meeting meant for Yang Lin. The Crown Prince's chances of ascending the throne smoothly increased with every day, and these suckling sycophants had to take this golden opportunity to sidle up to him whenever they had the chance.

The maids brought in a large brazier, and as Yang Lin looked at the glowing charcoal within, his eyes glazed over as he lost himself

in thought. “What position does Lin Ming have?” If he can reach the top 50, that should be enough for him to be a Seven Profound Valleys inner court disciple. If he becomes an inner court disciple, then his status would be no less than a Seven Profound Envoy or the Seven Profound Martial House’s Martial House Master!”

As the Crown Prince of Sky Fortune Kingdom, Yang Ling’s fate was closely intertwined with the Total Faction Martial Meeting. He had an approximate understand of what was happening at the Total Faction Martial Meeting. For all these years, the top 20 of the Total Faction Martial Meeting had basically been dominated by the core disciples of the Seven Profound Valleys. Occasionally, there would be some individuals who passed through, especially those from the 16 martial families.

As for the 36 countries, it was a fabulous and honorable result if one could reach the top 50. Not only that, but this sort of character would usually appear without exception in Huoluo Nation or Grace Venerate Nation.

In these past 30 years, Sky Fortune Kingdom didn’t have a single disciple who had advanced into the top 100 rankings. Well, there had been Mu Yinzhou from the four martial families, but he was a foreign martial artist who didn’t share the same surname as the family he represented.

This wait continued for another half hour. As evening approached, small black dots suddenly appeared in the distant cloudy sky. Yang Lin immediately shot up, even his cloak fell down from his shoulders.

All the nobles, martial artists, generals, and so forth all stood up at the same time. There were those with a deeper cultivation that were able to clearly see that these small black spots were actually Qin Ziya and his group returning on Heavenly Wind Eagles.

“They’ve arrived!”

Everyone left their seats, and the young palace ladies rubbed their frozen legs, ready to toss out fresh flowers. The reporters who worked for the Sky Fortune City gazette were ready and waiting, pulling out pen and paper in order to record every detail that would happen. Recently, under Yang Lin’s behest, the national gazette had launched complete coverage of the Total Faction Martial Meeting that was like a nationwide propaganda campaign.

There had been so many notes, papers, gazettes, and fliers passed out that even the old aunty who managed the closest tea shop and sold boiled eggs would know just what the Total Faction Martial Meeting was, and could tell anyone who cared to listen just how important the Total Faction Martial Meeting was to the martial artists of Sky Fortune Kingdom.

Flap flap flap

Six Heavenly Wind Eagles flew down one after another, landing on the open square and kicking up enormous gusts of snow beneath them. As Qin Ziya dismounted the Heavenly Wind Eagle, he had a wide smile on his face. Seeing this smile, the anxiety in Yang Lin’s heart eased by about half. It seemed as if Lin Ming had successfully reached the top 50.

He walked up with Marshal Qin Xiao, welcoming their arrival. Qin Xiao heartily laughed, saying, "I congratulate Martial House Master Qin on his triumphant return. Everyone, it's been tough on you all, but good job!"

Qin Ziya cupped his fists together in greetings and said, "I've troubled Your Highness the Crown Prince and Marshall Qin Xiao. Thankfully, good fortune was with us this time. During this Total Faction Martial Meeting, we had very good results."

Hearing this great news from Qin Ziya, Yang Lin's heart beat sped up. He glanced around the six people, but there was no shadow of Lin Ming.

Where was Lin Ming?

He was about to ask where Lin Ming was, when Qin Xiao exuberantly laughed, and then tugged on his favorite granddaughter's hands, "Xingxuan, how did you do?"

"Rank 169." Qin Xingxuan hugged onto Qin Xiao's arm, somewhat embarrassed. She had just managed to pass the mountain gate trial, and was still eliminated in the first group stage.

But even so, to have such a ranking at her age was still a very splendid result. Otherwise, she wouldn't have been chosen as a Seven Profound Valleys inner court disciple.

Sun Youdao stroked his beard, and said with a smile, “Marshal Qin, You have a fantastic granddaughter. Xingxuan has already been chosen by Elder Wen Hui of the Sword Faction, and will be a Sword Faction inner court disciple. Elder Wen Hui has been in the Xiantian realm for many years now, he has an unfathomable strength.”

“Xiantian!?”

Qin Xiao’s eyes flashed with awe. He didn’t know what it meant to rank 169th in the Total Faction Martial Meeting, but the shock of hearing about a Xiantian elder was just too great.

Qin Xiao had already stayed at the Houtian realm for many years, and had a deep understand of what the Xiantian realm was. To him, the Xiantian realm bottleneck was an impassable ravine. For the 80 years since Sky Fortune Kingdom was established, a Xiantian master had never appeared.

If Qin Xingxuan could become the disciple of a Xiantian master, then her future could be imagined.

“Hahaha! Good! Good! Very good!” Qin Xiao was overjoyed and surprise. He had worried that after he died, his Qin Family would decline. However, now that there was Qin Xingxuan, the fortunes of his family would continue for centuries.

At this moment, Yang Lin impatiently asked, “Martial House Master Qin, what about Lin Ming? What is his ranking?”

At this time, Yang Lin was even more excited than Qin Xiao. If Qin Xingxuan could become an inner court disciple with a ranking of 160, then Lin Ming was at least that.

Qin Ziya took a deep breath, his smile gradually spreading wider and wider. A full five breaths of time passed, and then Qin Ziya slowly spoke, stressing each and every syllable in an earnest manner, “Lin Ming, is the champion!”

“What!?” Yang Lin was stunned. For a time, he couldn’t even react. He almost wanted to ask what rank the champion was. He just couldn’t believe this – he didn’t dare to believe this!

Sun Youdao spoke up, sighing as he said, “Lin Ming became the champion of the Total Faction Martial Meeting, taking first place. He has already become one of the direct disciples of the Seven Profound Valleys...”

Chapter 302 – Serpent

Sun Youdao spoke up, sighing as he said, “Lin Ming became the champion of the Total Faction Martial Meeting, taking first place. He has already become one of the direct disciples of the Seven Profound Valleys...”

“...Champion of the Total Faction Martial Meeting? Direct disciple?” Yang Lin mumbled, the words of Sun Youdao echoing in his mind over and over. He was so shocked that he didn’t know how to react. After all, he knew what this news meant.

In these recent days, Yang Lin had researched everything he could about the Total Faction Martial Meeting. Naturally, he knew just what sort of existence a direct disciple was. The Seven Profound Valleys had four different classifications of disciples. The lowest class were the nominal disciples, followed by the outer court disciples, inner court disciples, and finally the highest, core disciples.

A core disciple was only selected every two Total Faction Martial Meetings, or in other words, every six years. Every faction only had a handful of core disciples, and the one that ranked first among these disciples was the direct disciple!

With seven factions, there would be seven direct disciples. Without a doubt, these seven disciples were all destined to enter into the top ten of the Total Faction Martial Meeting. This was a position that was coveted by every disciple within the Seven Profound Valleys, as the higher rank one was, the more resources they would have to cultivate with.

It could be said that as long as a direct disciple didn't fall from grace, they had an absolute chance to step into the Xiantian realm.

Within the Seven Profound Valleys, their status was even higher than an outer court elder!

What sort of status did a Seven Profound Valleys elder have? When Ouyang Dihua had run rampant through Sky Fortune City and was able to become the Seven Profound Envoy, that was all because his uncle was an elder who could back him up.

Because of this, even the emperor had to be fully respectful towards Ouyang Dihua, much less Yang Lin.

As a mere crown prince of Sky Fortune Kingdom who was already in an extremely precarious situation, Ouyang Dihua basically hadn't even bothered with Yang Lin.

“Lin Ming... already has a status equal to an elder...”

Yang Lin gulped. He already thought that Lin Ming would bring back a great gift for him, but he never imagined that it would be something so fantastic.

Total Faction Martial Meeting rank one!

Becoming a direct disciple!

Any one of these was enough to be recorded in the permanent history of Sky Fortune Kingdom. Who had ever heard of a disciple of the 36 countries becoming a direct disciple? Who had ever imagined a disciple of the 36 countries becoming the champion of the Total Faction Martial Meeting? Let alone the champion, there hadn't even been one who had ever reached the top five!

It wasn't only Yang Lin, but Qin Xiao, the great generals, and every other martial artist were all completely choked. As martial artists, they understood just how profound and deep this news was.

It meant that sooner or later, Lin Ming would become a Xiantian master.

A Xiantian master.

To those mortals, those were figures that only existed in legends.

For a time, silence fell over the entire square; there was only the sound of the cold, icy wind, and the fluttering of ribbons.

Yang Ling opened his mouth to speak several times but couldn't say anything, unable to calm down the turbulent waves that rolled through his heart. If Lin Ming had become a direct disciple, even if Yang Lin just got a little help, just a little, then let alone if he was the current crown prince, even if he was a bastard son that no one had ever seen before, he would still be able to sit upon Sky Fortune Kingdom's throne!

Throne...

Thinking this, Yang Lin almost burst into tears. For how many years had he been uneasy, skittish, unable to eat or sleep with peace? Once the throne was seized by someone else, then he, his mother, his younger sister, all would be beyond redemption!

The only ending to that path was death.

As Qin Ziya saw Yang Lin's excitement, he smiled and said, "Lin Ming is still at the Seven Profound Valleys. There are many matters he must still attend to, such as receiving the rewards and also some joint talent training program he needs to participate in. After that, he will decide which faction he wishes to join. Therefore we came back first."

As Qin Ziya spoke, Sun Youdao laughed, "Lin Ming is a treasure that every major faction wants to steal! Especially the Sword Faction and Acacia Faction, I heard that they are already heavily quarreling over him!"

There were many major factions that wanted Lin Ming to become their direct disciple?

Yang Lin let out a heavy breath. Although he wasn't surprised, listening to Sun Youdao say this was still incomparably shocking.

At this time, behind Yang Lin, the reporters for the government

newspaper sprang into action. They rubbed their hands together, warming up, and then excitedly began to write down the news. Such a shocking report would definitely cause major waves through the entire Sky Fortune Kingdom!

In fact, this was true...

The next day, the news that Lin Ming had become the champion of the Total Faction Martial Meeting spread throughout all of Sky Fortune City, rapidly propagating through the entire country.

Within the Seven Profound Martial House, all of the old and new disciples were excitedly discussing these events. That these individuals could share a Martial House that Lin Ming had once been a part of was already a matter to be very proud about. Dozens of years later, or even hundreds of years later, they could proudly boast to their descendants and say, “Hehe, that year, when your grandfather was young, he was once a fellow disciple to a Xiantian master!”

Especially those young female apprentices who had just recently entered and converted to Linmaniacs; to them, Lin Ming was their highest idol, their supreme crush, their dreamy sweetheart!

Far away in Green Mulberry City, the Lin Family had also received this news.

At this time, the Lin Family had been busy with New Year celebrations.

The holidays at the end of the year were the grandest occasion within Sky Fortune Kingdom. The emperor had to offer sacrifices to the heavens and receive all the officials of other countries. All of the other aristocratic families had to slaughter animals in worship at New Year's, and hold lengthy and cumbersome ceremonies.

The Lin Family was one of the top ranked families in Green Mulberry City. Naturally, they were not exempt from this.

But after they obtained the news that Lin Ming had become the champion of the Total Faction Martial Meeting, and had even become a direct disciple who would be a Xiantian master in the future, the entire Lin Family was seething in excitement.

This meant that for the next few centuries, the Lin Family would thrive, and even become one of the top ranked families within Sky Fortune Kingdom!

Thinking this, the Lin Family head couldn't help but cackle in glee. Every Lin Family servant obtained a thick red envelope packed with money. Naturally, every servant knew just why they were given this red envelope, and all of them spoke about the legendary young master of the Lin Family.

But during this year's New Year's ceremony, the Lin Family also paid a massive price. They put out an entire two years of income: 80,000 gold taels, to hold an unprecedented ancestral worship ceremony. The banquet had 160 tables and lasted for nine whole days. All of the heroes around were invited, as well as everyone else who mattered!

However, what was surprising was that after this nine day banquet, the gift money they had received actually totaled to 150,000 gold taels! Many of the families that the Lin Family couldn't match up to had actually sent their direct descendant juniors to join the Lin Family festivities and offer great amounts of money as a present.

But they were still a bit disappointed. No matter which great family came and wished to greet Lin Ming's parents, they were unable to. It seemed that the couple had already left the Lin Family, their whereabouts unknown...

This was only a minor matter. But still, there were some people who were sensitive to such things, that felt as if there was some hidden crisis within the jubilant festivities...

The day on which Qin Ziya returned was also the same day that the Tenth Prince, Yang Zhen, obtained the news. He spent an entire two days in his room, and after coming out, he appeared haggard as if he had instantly aged ten years.

In a battle for the throne, one either emerged as the ultimate glorious victor, or they fell to the pits of hell. At this time, Yang Zhen no longer had any paths left to walk. If he ascended to the throne, he would not forgive Yang Lin. If Yang Lin ascended to the throne, he wouldn't be forgiven.

By relying on the Zhu Family, that moment when they had offended Lin Ming was the worst move he had taken in his life. But

what was done was done – there was no more room for regret.

Now, he was at end of his path. To him, there was only one last move he could make in this chess game...

This move wouldn't necessarily allow him to revitalize his fading hopes, but if he didn't do it, then he would absolutely die.

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Late at night, Yang Zhen put on a thick, black cloak, and while escaping the attention of everyone, entered the Seven Profound Envoy's mansion.

This was where Ouyang Dihua had once lived. After Ouyang Dihua had died, Ouyang Boyan had come to Sky Fortune Kingdom. Afterwards, he had lived here. Maybe it was because he wanted to see the place where his nephew had last lived and look for some clues.

Ouyang Boyan had investigated for an entire month, but ended up with no clues, or even a trace of a hint. Ouyang Boyan rarely went out, and he hadn't yet left Sky Fortune Kingdom.

In accordance to the circumstances of the murder, the one that killed Ouyang Dihua had to be someone with at least a Xiantian cultivation. Otherwise, it was impossible to silently kill Ouyang Dihua under the protection of several bodyguards, and then quietly slip away.

Ouyang Boyan believed that in all likelihood, this killer had come for him. However, Ouyang Dihua had died merely as collateral damage. The reason he stayed at Sky Fortune Kingdom's Seven Profound Envoy mansion was to wait for this killer to come to him so that he could take his revenge.

However, he waited and waited, all the way until he received the news that Lin Ming had become the champion of the Total Faction Martial Meeting.

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"Yang Zhen greets Elder Ouyang!" Yang Zhen knelt on both knees and bowed in respect. Normally, martial artists didn't care much or follow the regulations and customs of mortals and kingdoms. Even if they saw Shi Zongtian, they wouldn't bow on both knees. But Yang Zhen actually did so. This was obviously showing how respectful and devoted he was.

"Yang Zhen?" Ouyang Boyan opened his eyes to glance at Yang Zhen, "What are you here for?"

"Elder Ouyang, after Mister Ouyang Dihua died, I had some suspicions I wanted to voice, but I don't know whether or not I should speak..."

Ouyang Boyan suddenly slyly smiled and said, "You suspect it was Lin Ming?"

Yang Zhen's heart went cold, but this wasn't too surprising. He calmly said, "Two months before Mister Ouyang Dihua died, he had a conflict with Lin Ming."

What Yang Zhen had said, Ouyang Boyan certainly knew. Of course, a mere conflict wouldn't necessarily become a matter worth killing over. Most importantly, at that time, Ouyang Boyan didn't think that Lin Ming had the capabilities.

But now...

If Lin Ming knew some sort of special technique, and he also had the help of a master from Divine Phoenix Island, then there was a high chance that he had killed Ouyang Dihua while he was under the protection of many guards.

At this time, Yang Zhen also said, "Elder Ouyang, I already received some additional news. After Qin Ziya returned to Sky Fortune City, he secretly visited Lin Ming's parents and transferred them somewhere else. My guess is that Lin Ming had entrusted Qin Ziya with this matter..."

"Is that right?" Ouyang Boyan's lips curved down in a grim scowl. If he was just guessing before, then now listening to Yang Zhen's words, killing intent had already moved into his heart. Within the entire Sky Fortune Kingdom, Ouyang Boyan was the only one who could make Lin Ming fear so much. If he wasn't guilty, then why would he do this?

In terms of strength, Ouyang Boyan naturally surpassed Lin Ming by a great margin. But in terms of status, he was in truth far inferior to Lin Ming. Lin Ming wasn't just some ordinary direct disciple, but according to news from Qin Ziya and the Seven Profound Valleys, he had familiar but unclear relations with the top fourth-grade sect, Divine Phoenix Island.

Compared to Lin Ming, Ouyang Boyan's influence was much weaker. He wasn't someone who would desperately seek Lin Ming for revenge at the cost of his own life just to get revenge for his nephew.

He would patiently bear this for now, and wait for an opportunity to quietly kill Lin Ming. Then once he discovered where Lin Ming's parents were, he would kill them too, and the secretly wipe out the Lin Family! Only in this manner would the hate in his heart be assuaged!

Chapter 303 – Come Back In 10 Years

In just one day, Lin Ming and Mu Qianyu had already flown tens of thousands of miles, stopping as they arrived at a transmission array formation which was built by Divine Phoenix Island.

A long distance transmission array was an extremely luxurious facility that required a massive amount of resources. Not only did there need to be experts stationed there to work it, but it also consumed a great deal of true essence stones.

“Lin Ming, you said that you wanted some fire-attribute material to craft the spear head?” Mu Qianyu was surprised, did Lin Ming have a rare dual-attribute body?

“Mm, yes.” Lin Ming vigorously nodded. He didn’t plan on hiding anything from Mu Qianyu, especially since after the Flame Essence within his body grew, his ability to handle fire would be exposed.

“You can also control fire?”

“A bit...” Lin Ming flicked a finger and a wisp of flame sprung up.

Seeing this, Mu Qianyu’s eyes flashed with a zealous light, and even her pitch rose a bit, “You have a double-attribute body!?”

“Yes.” Lin Ming braced himself as he acknowledged this. His double-attribute body naturally all depended on the Heretical God

Force.

“If you can control fire, why didn’t you say so earlier!” Mu Qianyu admonished.

“...You didn’t ask me.” Lin Ming replied with a puppy-eyed innocent look. “Don’t you remember when we traded some barbecue for one of Little Flame’s Vermilion Bird feathers? That was because I wanted to use it to enhance the fire in my body.”

As Lin Ming said this, Mu Qianyu did recall that Lin Ming had deceived Little Flame with some barbecue for a feather, and the unbridled happiness and smile that passed over his eyes in that moment, “Little Flame is just a baby. You were quite naughty Lin Ming.”

Lin Ming traced his nose, a bit embarrassed. He had to admit that the way he did it was quite evil, just like a strange uncle that tried to cheat a child with some candy.

“If you could control fire, then you should have told me earlier. My Divine Phoenix Island has two types of cultivation method manuals, one of which uses fire as the basis. That’s also the cultivation method that I study. I thought that Divine Phoenix Island’s cultivation methods didn’t suit you at the start, but if I knew, I would have directly pulled you into Divine Phoenix Island the first time I met you.” Mu Qianyu shook her head as she said this. If that had happened, things would have been much simpler.

“I suppose I am considered half a Divine Phoenix Island disciple.”

Even Lin Ming couldn't clearly figure out just where he was a disciple of.

“It's a bit bothersome. If I pull you into Divine Phoenix Island, there will inevitably be some people wagging their useless tongues. That's right, I haven't asked you, would you like to officially enter Divine Phoenix Island?”

Lin Ming hesitated. Enter Divine Phoenix Island?

This was indeed the best choice. Divine Phoenix Island had a rich amount of resources. Based on his current cultivation, it would be difficult to make anything valuable with his shallow inscription technique. If he wanted to use his skills to earn enough for the materials to craft the spear just by himself, who knew how many years it would take.

But because there was some sort of inexplicable self-respect in his heart that confused him, Lin Ming wasn't too willing to join Divine Phoenix Island.

If he obtained the spear crafting materials on credit, then it could be said he would completely depend on Mu Qianyu in the future... Lin Ming had a strange feeling that it was a bit similar to being a gigolo.

Mu Qianyu saw Lin Ming's hesitation, and her happy smile dimmed a bit. She looked at Lin Ming for awhile and asked, “It seems that you don't like to owe favors to people.”

Lin Ming silently nodded. “A bit, because right now, my favors aren’t worth anything...”

“Haha, listening to you, it sounds like the favors you owe towards others are priceless.” Mu Qianyu’s eyebrows pricked up and she smiled. She felt that although Lin Ming’s words were seemingly humble, it showed just how formidable and confident he was.

Lin Ming didn’t reply. In the future, it would be hard to guess just how valuable his favor would be. But at that time, it wouldn’t be so easy for him to owe anyone anything.

“Well, that’s fine, let’s talk about other things for now. If you want fire-attribute materials, I have two different types of top fire-attribute materials. Hehe, I’m sure they would move even your heart.”

Lin Ming’s heart jumped. If someone like Mu Qianyu could call it a top fire-attribute material, then it shouldn’t be any worse than the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo.

“What is it?”

“10,000 year old Fire Parasol Tree!”

“Mm!?”

In the legends, the phoenix had a naturally noble and pure

temperament. It would not drink anything that wasn't the morning dew, it wouldn't eat anything that wasn't the tenderest of bamboo, nor would it rest on any tree that wasn't a 10,000 year Parasol Tree. This Parasol Tree was the Fire Parasol Tree. The phoenix would only undergo its nirvana atop a Parasol Tree, and use the divine flames within its body to self-immolate, directly becoming an inferno of flames with the Parasol Tree.

A 10,000 year Fire Parasol Tree could be called a divine tree, its value was probably far beyond the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo!

In the refining of a spear shaft, using one material was naturally worse than use two materials. If the 10,000 year Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo's bamboo fiber could become the bone, and wrap around the tree threads of the 10,000 year Fire Parasol Tree, then the spear shaft that was created would not only be indestructible, but it could simultaneously channel the dual attributes of fire and thunder origin energy with no impedance at all; this was simply a perfect combination!

How could Lin Ming's heart not be moved at the thought of such a perfect spear shaft?

Mu Qianyu gently traced the red spatial ring on her index finger and continued saying, "In terms of fire-attribute materials, my Divine Phoenix Island probably has the richest resources out of all the sects in the South Horizon Region. Besides the 10,000 year Fire Parasol Tree, there is also the Vermillion Bird Flame Essence that is left behind after a Vermillion Bird undergoes nirvana. I can give you some. If you mix it into the spearhead, it will greatly enhance

the spear's power of flame.”

Mu Qianyu's words caused Lin Ming's heart to beat with eagerness. With so many top materials, what grade spear would be refined from them?

.....

At the edge of the White Peak territory, there was a mountain range that spanned 10,000 miles. The peak of the highest mountain in this mountain range extended up 90,000 feet, directly piercing the sky!

This height was only 10,000 feet shorter than Thundercrash Mountain. The peak had surpassed the Calmstream Heavens, and approached the Primal Chaos Heavens!

Sky Spill Continent's skies had six different layers. 30,000 feet above the clouds were the Primal Chaos Heavens. Here, the pure origin energy of metal, wood, water, fire, earth, thunder, and wind existed in their purest, most brutal and tyrannically savage form. Everyone below a Xiantian rank master who came up to the Primal Chaos Heavens would be immediately ripped apart by the violent and lethal surges of origin energy.

Initially, Thundercrash Mountain had approached the Primal Chaos Heavens and its entire summit was comprised of magnetic ore. Because of these special circumstances, it created a natural formation that was able to direct the flow of thunder origin energy from the Primal Chaos Heavens, forming an endless land of

heavenly thunder. This was why the peak of Thundercrash Mountain had become a land of powerful thunder.

But this sort of mountain peak didn't have such special circumstances. However, above the peak, there was a massive eight trigrams fire array formation that was able to direct the flow of fire origin energy, forming endless heavenly fire. Although this sort of man-made formation was far inferior to the vast scale of Thundercrash Mountain, it wasn't any less in terms of quality. In the very center of the array formation, there was a vibrant heavenly fire burning; even a normal Xiantian master would have no way to defend against that.

Lin Ming saw the blazing fire that burned atop of the mountain from far away and was able to feel the rich origin energy emitting from it. He was completely shocked. If it wasn't for Mu Qianyu informing him in advance, it would be very hard for him to imagine that this was created by a man-made array formation.

“This is where Ancestor Chi Yan lives?”

“Mm... you see the heavenly fire array formation? That is Senior's 'Refining Furnace'.

Lin Ming sucked in a breath of cold air. To have an eight trigrams array formation on such a grand scale just to use it as a refining furnace... this was truly a great show of power. No wonder this Ancestor Chi Yan chose to live in seclusion on these remote mountains; it was probably because of the heavenly fire at this mountain peak.

To use heavenly fire as a furnace, with the 10,000 year Fire Parasol Tree and the 10,000 Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo as the core, along with some other top quality thunder and fire materials to supplement... just what grade of treasure could be refined from this?

Lin Ming was filled with an incomparable amount of anticipation.

“Senior Chi Yan, Junior Mu Qianyu wishes to seek an audience for a certain matter.”

Mu Qianyu stopped just outside the eight trigrams fire array formation, and shouted out.

Within the Divine Phoenix area, for this recluse to cause Mu Qianyu to treat him with so much respect, this Ancestor Chi Yan’s strength could be imagined. But at this time, Lin Ming’s attention was actually attracted by the eight trigrams fire array formation. This sort of layout seemed... it seemed to have some places in common with the array formations found in the Realm of the Gods.

The first soul fragment that Lin Ming absorbed had come from an inscription master from the Realm of the Gods. The second soul fragment that he absorbed had come from an array master. This sort of Supreme Elder had a massive amount of knowledge and insight on array formations, all of which was completely absorbed by Lin Ming. However, the principles behind the array formations

were too varied and profound, and also just the weakest array formation in those memories had required a Revolving Core master to create. Because of this, Lin Ming hadn't spent any time studying them.

To the current him, these memories were useless. It was this reason that Lin Ming had been so disappointed when he received these memories. It wasn't until he had also found the Heretical God Force and Golden Roc Shattering the Void in this soul fragment did he think that his choice had borne some fruit.

After this, Lin Ming had experienced the Seven Profound Valleys' Array Faction.

He had seen the mountain gate trial, Fang Qi's Golden Light Array Flag and Nine Circles of Blue Light Array, and before, Lin Ming had also been saved by the Thunderbolt Devilfire Bead, all of which belonged to the array formation technique of the Seven Profound Valleys. However, system and principles of array formations that the Seven Profound Valleys' Array Faction had used were completely different than those of the Realm of the Gods. If the array formations of the Realm of the Gods' power, might, and size were their symbol, then the Seven Profound Valleys' Array Faction had pursued the path of simplicity and ease of use as their direction.

Especially those elements of compression that were found within the Thunderbolt Devilfire Bead, they had left an extremely deep impression on Lin Ming. This bead was enough to allow a weak martial artist to instantly kill a Pulse Condensation master.

The array master didn't have any memories of these sorts of things in the Realm of the Gods. Lin Ming had thought that the array formation system of Sky Spill Continent and the Realm of the Gods were completely different, but now, seeing this Ancestor Chi Yan's eight trigrams fire array formation, Lin Ming saw many shadows of the Realm of the Gods' array formations.

In comparison to the memories of the Realm of the Gods' Supreme Elder, this eight trigrams formation was very rough, filled with mistakes, oversights, and completely unreasonable areas.

As the bright flames burned, although one could feel the rich fire origin energy coming outside the array formation, there wasn't even the slightest bit of heat emitted. It was truly amazing.

The fire array formation was quiet for a long time. Then, an ancient voice sounded out, "Mu Family's little baby girl? This old man is busy, what do you want?"

Mu Qianyu respectfully said, "This junior has come to request that Senior help craft a long spear."

"Refining a treasure? This old man is busy. Come back in 10 years. At that time, old man might have some free time."

Ten years!?!?

Mu Qianyu froze. Even Lin Ming, who was listening, was left

speechless. To them, 10 years was a very exaggerated amount of time. But to the several hundred year old Revolving Core master, 10 years was probably the time it took for one period of seclusion.

Why would anyone wait 10 years! In 10 years, anything could happen! At that time, Lin Ming probably wouldn't even need this old man's help!

Mu Qianyu seemed as if she wanted to say something, but ended up not saying anything. She looked at Lin Ming with some embarrassment, and her beautiful face flashed with a hint of awkwardness. "I apologize. I didn't think it would be like this..."

Mu Qianyu really felt as if she lost a great deal of face this time. She had promised that she would help, but this was the result. "Let's go back, there are some other people that I can ask to help. Once Senior Chi Yan has decided on a matter, he won't change his mind, anything we do is useless."

"No, wait... maybe... I might have a way to make Senior Chi Yan change his mind..."

Lin Ming stroked his chin, looking quite thoughtful...

Chapter 304 – There Is Always Someone Higher

Have Ancestor Chi Yan change his mind?

Mu Qianyu looked at Lin Ming with some suspicious, as if this plan simply wasn't going to work. But, since there had been so many inconceivable situations and miracles that had occurred around Lin Ming, Mu Qianyu decided to step back a bit and see what would happen.

However, she didn't think that for a good half hour, Lin Ming would only stand there, deep in thought.

“Lin Ming, what are you planning on doing?” Mu Qianyu asked, puzzled.

Lin Ming didn't answer, it was as if he hadn't heard Mu Qianyu's question at all. Then, Mu Qianyu discovered that Lin Ming had at some point entered the ethereal martial intent state, and his perception was cut off from the outside world.

While Lin Ming was in the ethereal martial intent state, the surrounding fire origin energy was involuntarily absorbed into him. This was the effect of the Heretical God Seed displaying itself. With the Heretical God Seed, even without Lin Ming's control, it would still independently absorb origin energy.

‘Is Lin Ming taking this opportunity to cultivate?’

Mu Qianyu couldn't help but think this. After all, the fire origin energy here was abundant and pure. If one cultivated here, they would have twice the result with half the effort.

This sort of digging in someone else's corner and taking advantage of them was just too rude and tasteless. But, Mu Qianyu had a very good grasp of Lin Ming's character. He wasn't the sort of person who would do something so dastardly. Much less if he were only standing here for a day, how much fire origin energy could he possibly absorb?

What was he doing?

Thus another half hour passed. The sky was becoming darker, and at this moment, from the deepest depths of the fire formation, Ancestor Chi Yan let out a heavy grunt.

"Boy, are you absorbing my fire origin energy?"

Lin Ming was startled, immediately awakening from his ethereal martial intent. Ancestor Chi Yan's grunt had contained a fluctuation of true essence, and had lifted him from his ethereal state. But he was able to do what he wanted to in an hour's time.

"Is this boy of yours also from Divine Phoenix Island? He refuses to leave, and also tries to steal away the fire origin energy that this old man has attracted here? When did the disciples from Divine Phoenix Island become such amazing individuals?"

Ancestor Chi Yan's voice dripped with irony. The truth was, he didn't care much about the fire origin energy, it was just that Lin Ming's approach wasn't to his liking.

"This old man will consider the fame of Divine Phoenix Island and will not bother with the likes of you. Now, make haste and get off my mountain. When this old man eats his dinner, he doesn't like beggars circling around his table, picking up scraps from the ground!"

These words of Ancestor Chi Yan were just too harsh, too crass, even Mu Qianyu's expression changed. Although Ancestor Chi Yan referred to Lin Ming, he had associated her with him. Mu Qianyu had always had a noble and lofty status, how could she lose face like this?

However, Ancestor Chi Yan's strength was far beyond hers, and he had a strange and eccentric temperament. He wasn't the type that would even give face to her master. Mu Qianyu could only endure, pulling at Lin Ming's sleeve and rebuking him, "Lin Ming, what are you doing? If you want to absorb the fire origin energy, then my Divine Phoenix Island also has this. There is no need to stand here, let's descend the mountain first."

Lin Ming said, "Miss Mu, I'm not absorbing the fire origin energy, it's just..." After Lin Ming spoke to her, he then shouted out, "Senior Chi Yan, I accidentally absorbed your fire origin energy. For that, I am truly sorry. But, I think that if you can contain all of the fire origin energy within the eight trigrams fire formation, it won't be absorbed by others, and the power of the heavenly fire

will also be enhanced!”

The eight trigrams fire formation that Ancestor Chi Yan laid down could contain all of the heat, but it could not isolate all of the fire origin energy from passing through. To the array formation, this was a very big loss.

Ancestor Chi Yan coldly snorted and said, “You snotty-nosed baby, what do you know? This old man will not bother with your nonsense. Quickly get off this old man’s mountain or do not blame this old man for being impolite!”

Being bothered by Lin Ming again, Ancestor Chi Yan’s mood became increasingly poor. He had gone into seclusion for the sake of mediating on an ancient array formation jade slip that he had found in order to improve the power of the eight trigrams fire array formation. With Lin Ming standing outside, it was no different than a fly bothering him as he was reading. He just wanted to slap him to death.

“Lin Ming, let’s quickly go.” Mu Qianyu knew of Ancestor Chi Yan’s temperament. If Lin Ming truly provoked his ire, there was a great chance he would die here.

As Lin Ming was being pulled by Mu Qianyu, he loudly said again, “Senior Chi Yan, was this junior wrong?”

Ancestor Chi Yan suddenly said, “Enough with your worthless talk!”

Containing all of the fire origin energy would of course increase the might of the heavenly fire, even a fool would know this! The problem was, just how would this be achieved? He had used a massive amount of time and energy to lay down this eight trigrams fire array formation. He had used his own vast knowledge of array formation as the blueprint, and then also integrated some ancient array formation knowledge, finally creating this.

It was already very difficult to isolate the heat from passing through. If he wanted to also isolate the fire origin energy, it was simply just a dream. The power would be amazing, enough to quicken the fire origin energy of the Primal Chaos Heavens into this array formation. But wasn't this easier said than done?

“Senior Chi Yan, this junior met an expert when he was young and was taught about array formations and inscription techniques as a child. Although I am a bit dumb and lacking in talent, I still learnt much, especially about the arrangement of fire-attribute array formations. About these, I have some understanding. Senior Chi Yan's array formation...” Despite Mu Qianyu's frantic winks signaling him to run, he still shouted out loud like before.

The array formation that Ancestor Chi Yan laid down, in comparison to the array formation that the Supreme Elder from the Realm of the Gods did, was truly full of flaws and errors that were difficult to bear.

Although Lin Ming could find these flaws with relative ease, it wasn't easy to improve them. That was why Lin Ming had entered into the ethereal martial intent state in order to fuse with all of the memories from that Supreme Elder from the Realm of the Gods.

After contemplating for an hour, he finally figured out solutions for several areas. These were only general ideas, but if Ancestor Chi Yan studied along Lin Ming's direction, he should be able to obtain many insights.

“Hahahahahahaha!” Ancestor Chi Yan laughed, a vast wave of true essence surging in all directions. Even the flames within the eight trigrams fire array formation began to churn!

Lin Ming paled, retreating several steps as he was unable to bear the pressure. Thankfully, Mu Qianyu had held onto him, and was quickly pushing true essence into Lin Ming's body, therefore protecting him.

“Lin Ming, don't say things just because you can! Senior Chi Yan is a Revolving Core master, and also an array formation grandmaster! Do you have confidence?” At this time Mu Qianyu was extremely vexated. She wanted to forcefully stop Lin Ming's actions and fly down the mountain with him.

Although all sorts of incredible miracles had happened to Lin Ming, improving this eight trigrams fire array formation was simply too ridiculous, it was just plain unbelievable. Array formations were a profound and esoteric art, all true array grandmasters like Ancestor Chi Yan had spent hundreds of years to gradually reach where they did.

How old was Lin Ming? Even if he had monstrous talent, how many things could he actually learn at once? Besides, how great could this so called 'expert' master of his be to appear in Sky Fortune Kingdom. Could this 'expert' be at the Revolving Core

realm? Even if this master was at the Revolving Core realm, could they compare to Ancestor Chi Yan?”

If Lin Ming had studied under this master, could his attainments of array formation still surpass that of Ancestor Chi Yan? Even though Mu Qianyu usually trusted Lin Ming a great deal, she still didn't believe in this.

Chi Yang laughed for a full ten breaths before stopping. “This is just too farcical! I, Chi Yan, have already lived for 380 years! To think that one day, I would have some snotty-nosed brat and his country bumpkin array neophyte master thinking that they can give pointers to this old man about his understanding of array formations!”

Lin Ming was repeatedly ridiculed by Ancestor Chi Yan, and that old bag of bones had actually poured true essence into his laughter, almost damaging his meridians. Even Lin Ming's anger was swelling up. He said, “My master might not be some country bumpkin, Senior Chi Yan! There is no limit to this world, however strong you are, there is always someone better! I was once a frog in a well, and thought that the Xiantian realm was the highest one could reach. However, I learnt afterwards, that above Xiantian was the Revolving Core, and above Revolving Core, there are even higher realms!”

“What did you say!?” Within the eight trigrams fire array formation, Senior Chi Yan's mind chilled, and a vibrant wave of murderous intent overflowed in all directions. “You think that you are teaching this old man? Are you saying that this old man is a frog in a well? Good, very good! This old man will give you a

chance, if you can say just what problems there are within the eight trigrams fire array formation, then this old man shall immediately apologize and forge your spear with my own furnace! But, if you cannot say what is wrong, then leave behind your blathering tongue and sever all your meridians, wasting your martial arts! For Divine Phoenix Island's sake, this old man will let you keep your worthless life!"

With these few words from Ancestor Chi Yan, Mu Qianyu was greatly alarmed. Sever his meridians and waste his martial arts? To a martial artist, this was no different than dying!

In the end, her worst fears had occurred. What Ancestor Chi Yan said, he would certainly accomplish. But just how deep of an understanding could Lin Ming have of fire origin energy array formations? What if he was wrong?

Mu Qianyu's heart was racing. At this point, there was nothing else she could do. Even if she and Little Flame added together, they were not a match for Ancestor Chi Yan.

If matters really degraded to such an irrevocable step, then Mu Qianyu could only protect Lin Ming's life and hope that Ancestor Chi Yan would show some face to her master...

Lin Ming thought for a moment, organizing his thoughts and carefully sorting the words to use. He slowly, but clearly said, "Senior has created 12 spinning spiral fire rune columns within the fire array formation. These fire rune columns can gather and separate fire origin energy, but the created friction will drain the fire origin energy of strength, and will also disrupt the force fields

that contain the fire origin energy. Not only will this wear down the array formation, causing it to need repairs every 4 or 5 years, but it will also create holes within the force field, dissipating the fire origin energy. This is one of the flaws.

“The second one, is that the 36 spiral runes are distributed in a very unreasonable manner. Because, even a small deviation in the arrangement and distance will result in the origin energies influencing each other, forming a barrier which will subsequently damage the crystals that contain the origin energy, causing a massive amount of origin energy to dissipate. Since it cannot be contained, this results in it once again escaping.”

“The third is...”

As Lin Ming endlessly droned on, Mu Qianyu listened from the side, flabbergasted. At this point, her feelings were hard to describe. That is, although she didn't know what Lin Ming was saying, or whether it was correct, she could hear that he was very confident in his words, and they contained a powerful belief.

And what was most crucial, was that the sneering laughter from Ancestor Chi Yan within the fire array formation had long stopped...

Could it be that everything Lin Ming said was correct?

Heavens!

He was only 16 years old! Even if his master was the number one array master of Sky Spill Continent, how could he study all of this? What sort of terrifying perception was this?

Chapter 305 – Path of Refining as the Path of Martial Arts

Within the massive fire array formation, the more Ancestor Chi Yan listened, the more he was shocked. From the first time that Lin Ming had mentioned the 12 fire rune columns he had been shaken. The so-called fire rune columns and the 36 spiral runes were all completely terms from the ancient array formations!

The extraordinary and ancient array formations that had been passed down to these times were already incomplete. Any archaic array formation jade slip was a legacy that every array master longed for in their dreams. Even the appearance of a single one could set off a bloody and terrifying war!

This boy actually understood the ancient extraordinary array formations? Just who was his master?

Moreover, what startled Ancestor Chi Yan the most was that Lin Ming's perception of the Dao of array formations was simply terrifying!

The styles of ancient array formations were complex and limitless in profundity. Even with the best teacher, without several decades of time, nothing would come of it. But this young boy who looked at most 18 years old, actually had the perception and vision to see the flaws in his own array formation?

Even before when he said, 'the created friction will drain the fire origin energy of strength, and will also disrupt the force fields that

contain the fire origin energy. Not only will this wear down the array formation, causing it to need repairs every four or five years', that was also a very accurate and true judgement. After he first laid down this array formation, he had to repair it every four years. It wasn't until later when he had added in a very precious material into the array formation that he managed to forcefully extend the deadline to every ten years...

Just what was the origin of this boy?

Lin Ming finished speaking in less than half an incense stick of time. And Ancestor Chi Yan who was in the fire array formation, had fallen into a long silence ever since Lin Ming spoke. All of that murderous intent that he had been giving off was also contained.

Mu Qianyu was standing by the side, not sure what to say. After a long time, Ancestor Chi Yan's hoarse voice sounded out from within the array formation, "You... what is your master's name?"

Lin Ming said, "Master is an expert that I encountered when I was 12 years old. As for his name, Master never mentioned it."

"12 years old... how old are you now?" Ancestor Chi Yan asked in a somewhat trembling voice.

"Reporting to Senior, junior is currently 16 years old."

"16 years old! Haha! 16 years old! Laughable! Hilarious!" With an almost insane chuckle, Ancestor Chi Yan flung his sleeves and a

wall of the fire array formation opened up. He wore a long red robe, and his hair was split in half, crazily scattered all around. Like this, Ancestor Chi Yan stepped out of the eight trigrams fire array formation.

Ancestor Chi Yan's face was deathly white, as if he was near death, and both of his eyes revealed a lonely and bitter light. "A 16 year old snot-nosed brat... studies array formations for a mere four years, but can actually point out all the mistakes in this eight trigrams fire array formation that I used 20 years of painstaking care and effort to lay down! Too pitiful! Too laughable!"

Lin Ming had originally wanted to point out some flaws in Ancestor Chi Yan's array formation, and then propose some areas of possible improvement. As exchange, Ancestor Chi Yan would forge the spear for him. But he didn't think that he would stimulate such a crazy and ferocious attitude. This old man wasn't at all normal from the start, and it seemed that he had psychotic tendencies.

Lin Ming hesitated for a moment, and cupped his hands together, saying, "Senior must be joking. The junior has only studied a few limited array formations, and Senior's eight trigrams fire array formation just happened to be similar to the fire formation that my master taught me. Therefore, I was able to notice some flaws."

"Four years? Has only studied a few limited array formations? ... Haha!" Ancestor Chi Yan's lips twitched. Lin Ming had said all of this so easily, but array formations were an art which had to be studied in a very orderly way. If there wasn't a solid foundation, just where would a high-level array formation like this eight

trigrams fire array formation come from? Thin air? And it was also one of the incomparably complex and esoteric ancient arrays!

“There truly is no limit in this universe, there is always someone higher! I was truly a frog in a well, average, mediocre!” Ancestor Chi Yan looked to the skies and deeply sighed. The eight trigrams fire array formation ripped open again, leaving a gap the size of a person. Then, he turned around and walked inside, as if he were in a trance.

Lin Ming paused, hesitant, and then entered the eight trigrams fire array formation, following Ancestor Chi Yan.

“Lin Ming, your master taught you about ancient array formations?” Mu Qianyu was able to slowly come to terms with this unthinkable truth after a long time. This was much more stunning than Lin Ming absorbing the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder with a trivial Bone Forging cultivation.

As soon as Lin Ming heard this question, he felt a bit awkward. He didn't want to lie to Mu Qianyu, but since things had already come this, he had to continue lying. “I don't know what an ancient array is. What Master taught me, I studied and learned. The truth is that I cannot arrange any array formation, I only know some superficial knowledge.”

If he wanted to arrange such a large-scale array formation, Lin Ming would need at least a cultivation at the Revolving Core realm. Lin Ming naturally didn't have this ability.

Mu Qianyu hadn't thought that Lin Ming would have such a master. If Lin Ming's master was at the Xiantian realm, then she wouldn't be surprised. After all, the talent that had emerged within Lin Ming really made one think that he wasn't some common mortal martial artist. But hearing Ancestor Chi Yan's depressed words, Lin Ming's master might even have a high chance of being a Supreme Elder who had flown into the Realm of the Gods!

This sort of character could call himself an emperor if he wished. Within Sky Skill Continent, he would be the king of kings, the highest possible existence!

If Lin Ming had such a master, then why wouldn't he follow him into the Holy Lands to lead a saintly cultivating life? Why would he join the small Seven Profound Valleys?

Mu Qianyu was puzzled.

Or maybe, his master had already flown into the Realm of the Gods?

The two followed Ancestor Chi Yan to his residence, it was a cave mansion that was located in the center of the fire array formation. Perhaps because it had been roasted by the fire origin energy for a long time, the walls of the cave mansion had already been burned into a deep ruby red.

The inside of the cave mansion was filled up with piles upon piles of miscellaneous goods. There were array flags, array formation

jade slips, array discs, and all sorts of other treasures. There were even two wooden puppets – these were probably the servant puppets that handled Ancestor Chi Yan’s daily needs.

Seeing all this, Lin Ming could imagine that if someone were to live here daily, only concentrating on array formations and watching these dead puppets day in and day out, even the most normal and well-adjusted of individuals would have mental issues.

“You will stay here today. This old man’s mood is no longer suitable for forging a spear. Tomorrow, I shall fire up the furnace! What this old man has said will not change. I take back the rude words I said, and also apologize to this Little Brother! I will even put up some of my own collection of refining materials as an apology gift to make amends.” As Ancestor Chi Yan said this, he took out a hand sized lump of dark purple metal from his spatial ring and laid it on the table.

The metal in his palm was only the size of a hand, but when it bore down on the table, the table seemed as if it would fall apart at any time.

Lin Ming’s eyes brightened. This dark purple, almost black whatever it was had to be much heavier than dark purple elastic iron or even heavy profound soft silver. Not only that, but he could feel a thick energy emitting from the dark purple metal that caused his heart to race. In the dim light of the cave, he could see the air around the dark purple metal twisting, as if it were distorted.

Before, Ancestor Chi Yan had said that if Lin Ming could point out flaws in his fire array formation, then he would immediately

apologize and help Lin Ming forge his spear.

Ancestor Chi Yan had an extremely stubborn and unruly temperament; it was extremely difficult for him to lower his head and apologize to anyone. Lin Ming hadn't thought that he would not only apologize, but also offer up materials from his own collection. The value of materials that Ancestor Chi Yan would collect could be imagined!

“Is this... Purple Comet?”

Mu Qianyu was bewildered as she looked at this lump of dark purple metal, not daring to be positive in her guess. Because Mu Qianyu had had contact with Ancestor Chi Yan many times, she also had a deep understanding of many different types of refining materials. Purple Comet was a material that was enough to forge a top high-grade earth-step treasure. Or, if it was purified enough, Purple Comet could even create a heaven-step treasure!

A heaven-step treasure was a priceless object that would often only be used by emperors who were peerless powerhouses!

If the Purple Comet was used in addition to the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo and Sacred Flame Parasol Tree, then the grade of Lin Ming's spear might even surpass that of her own Vermillion Bird Sword!

The Vermillion Bird Sword was one of the twin Ice and Fire Swords of Divine Phoenix Island, and also one of the holy treasures of her sect. How could Mu Qianyu not be startled!

“Good. This is exactly Purple Comet. In my life, I have no plans to try and soar up to the Realm of the Gods, that is too remote a possibility for me. My ultimate goal is to forge a heaven-step treasure, and carve my name so it spreads through history. That is why I collect all the materials I can that can forge a heaven-step treasure. This piece of Purple Comet is too small to make a heaven-step treasure, but it’s just right for me to forge a spear for you.”

“Senior Chi Yan, this is...” Lin Ming didn’t know what to say. Such a material was extremely precious, even to someone like Ancestor Chi Yan. He didn’t think that not only would the old man apologize, but he would also take out such a precious material. This old man was serious in keeping each and every one of his promises!

Ancestor Chi Yan gave a deep sigh and slowly said, “My path of refining is just like your path of martial arts. I said that if you can point out the flaws in my array formation, then I will apologize and forge a spear for you. Otherwise, I would cut off your tongue and waste your martial arts.

“Since I wanted to destroy your martial arts, then I naturally have to pay an equal price!”

As Ancestor Chi Yan said, he had already subconsciously placed Lin Ming on the same level as himself. A peerless master like himself was actually talking to someone like an ant about equality. No matter if it were Lin Ming’s master or his terrifying perception of the Dao of array formations, Ancestor Chi Yan could see that 100 years from now, Lin Ming would become a peerless powerhouse of

his generation.

Lin Ming sighed. Although Ancestor Chi Yan truly did have an eccentric, unreasonable, and sometimes cruel temperament, his heart of martial arts was actually incomparably firm and pure. Someone with such faith in their own beliefs could often walk further down the path of martial arts.

In truth, this kind of person was worth respecting a great deal. Thinking this, Lin Ming said, “Senior Chi Yan, about Senior’s eight trigrams fire array formation, junior has some opinions. I can offer some humble words in the hope that Senior may be inspired just a bit.”

“Mm?” Ancestor Chi Yan’s eyes shined, his voice beginning to pick up with excitement. Naturally, he couldn’t look down on Lin Ming again. “What suggestions do you have? This old man is listening with all ears!”

The eight trigrams fire array formation was one of his lifelines. In order to forge a heaven-step treasure, one of the greatest constraints was the flame itself. For instance, Purple Comet and other materials on the same rank had to be purified enough to make a heaven-step treasure. But to do this was much easier said than done. Even Ancestor Chi Yan didn’t have the current ability to refine them to that extent.

Lin Ming said, “About the fire rune columns I mentioned before, the fire rune columns can increase the power of flame, but it will also dissipate the fire origin energy. But if three arc symbols were carved into the fire rune columns at calculated distances, then the

symbols would be able to confine fire origin essence during rotation, reducing the fire origin energy that dissipates. Of course, the problem is that the arc symbols are easily worn out by fire origin energy, and would have to be redrawn every three years.”

“Once every three years is not a problem!” Ancestor Chi Yan blurted out in excitement. He was just too hyped up at the moment. He had deduced the model in his mind, and it really would be viable!

Chapter 306 – Swallowing the Heaven

Opening Pill

“Once every three years is not a problem!” Ancestor Chi Yan blurted out in excitement. He was just too hyped up at the moment. He had deduced the model in his mind, and it really would be viable!

“That’s great! And the second is about the distribution distances of the spiral runes.” As Lin Ming confidently spoke, Ancestor Chi Yan’s eyes became increasingly bright. Everything that Lin Ming said were matters that concerned ancient array formations. He didn’t imagine that not only would Lin Ming be able to notice the flaws in his array formation, but he would also be able to give him insights into possible solutions!

To find flaws and to give solutions to those flaws were two completely different concepts. For instance, there were some flaws that Ancestor Chi Yan could see, but couldn’t solve.

It was hard to imagine that a mere 16 year old child had already understood the incomparably challenging and difficult ancient array formations to such a degree!

“I also have to be careful of the angles and distance between the 36 spiral runes? Before now, I never thought that the connecting angles would actually have a subtle effect on the fire origin energy!” Ancestor Chi Yan eyes widened as if a great thought had suddenly dawned on him. He already looked over a square array plate, starting to imagine the scenario in his head.

“Right! Right! It truly does have subtle effects on the origin energy force field! If used well, then it can even act as a natural boundary against the fire origin energy! Such a wonderfully innovative idea! It seems simple, but in such a complicated and vast array it so actually impossibly difficult to find!”

Ancestor Chi Yan was so excited that he could dance with joy at any moment. He constantly practiced the scenarios and constantly asked Lin Ming series of questions. Lin Ming was instantly able to speak on some questions, but some questions he had to think about for a long time. The conversation between the two became increasingly congenial and speculative, and Mu Qianyu could only watch in amazement from the side.

She watched as the young boy and old man talked jovially for over an hour until the sun began to go down, and they still didn't stop. Words and phrases came from their mouths that she wasn't able to completely understand, but she had a feeling that they were very complex and very profound.

As they conversed, Ancestor Chi Yan had a very eccentric appearance. Sometimes he frowned, sometimes he laughed, sometimes he was suddenly enlightened, sometimes he slapped his thighs in happiness, and sometimes he slapped his own forehead, saying “how come I hadn't thought of this sooner?”. It wouldn't be difficult to say that with such exaggerated movements and facial expressions, he was just like a very old and crazy-looking child.

Seeing that these two would probably have a conversation that lasted all night, Mu Qianyu didn't know what to do. She stood up,

brewed a pot of tea, then filled two cups to the brim and brought them over.

At this time, the two of them spontaneously picked up the teacups to drink, as if their throats had long become dry.

Looking at the two drinking tea with such a natural appearance, Mu Qianyu didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. A dignified and holy Divine Phoenix Island Saintess had actually become a young maid for a day. She couldn't edge into their conversation in any way, and could only be responsible for pouring tea...

The truth was that Lin Ming was also obtaining a great deal of benefits from this conversation with Ancestor Chi Yan. In the memories of the Realm of the Gods' Supreme Elder, there were many facets that didn't suit Sky Spill Continent. For instance, there were some array formation materials that were only found in the Realm of the Gods, and he needed to look for substitutes in Sky Spill Continent. Also, because of his limited cultivation, there were many array symbols that he couldn't control.

This was all information that Ancestor Chi Yan had obtained after a long period of experimentation and experience, he told Lin Ming without any reservation.

Lin Ming silently remembered all of it. Although his current strength wasn't enough, at some point in the future, it would be useful when he wanted to lay down an array formation.

During the conversation, Ancestor Chi Yan's reverence and

admiration of Lin Ming's 'master' increased with every minute. Simply by hearing the names of the unattainable materials and the near impossible array symbols the even he couldn't control, the power and breadth of knowledge of this master could be seen.

Really, knowledge was infinite. No matter how strong one was, there was always someone above!

Ancestor Chi Yan sighed as he felt this once again.

.....

After another hour passed, Ancestor Chi Yan's face was a bright ruddy red. He pulled Lin Ming and said, "Nephew Lin, this is a great talk that I've had with you. This was enough for me to save another thirty years in seclusion!"

This statement wasn't too exaggerated. These things that Lin Ming had spoken of, Ancestor Chi Yan might not have had such results even if he meditated for 30 years.

"This chat with Senior has also been of great benefit to me." As Lin Ming heard this title of 'Nephew Lin', he thought it was quite strange. But Ancestor Chi Yan considered him a disciple of Divine Phoenix Island, calling him a good nephew was understandable.

"Haha, don't flatter this old man! We are talking about you here! After listening to you, I have gained too many insights. I will have to ponder on them and improve my eight trigrams fire array

formation. Nephew Lin, your spear refinement will have to wait until I improve the array formation. With the new refinement effect from the fire array formation, I will even be able to purify the Purple Comet to a certain degree!” Ancestor Chi Yan’s voice was filled with excitement. After increasing the might of the eight trigrams fire array formation, he would be one step closer to his ultimate life goal of refining a heaven-step treasure.

“Then... Nephew Lin, Mu Family’s baby girl, you can stay in this old man’s home. This old man will give you the best place to cultivate. The fire origin energy is incomparably rich here, and is absolutely superior to cultivating at Divine Phoenix Island! If you cultivate here, you can absorb as much fire origin energy as you want!”

As Mu Qianyu heard Ancestor Chi Yan’s words, she didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. Somehow, Lin Ming had managed to become the honorable Nephew Lin, while she remained the ‘Mu Family’s baby girl’. There truly were an unexpected number of events that occurred after visiting this kooky old man.

“It’s here.”

Ancestor Chi Yan pushed open a thick heavy wooden door that was engraved with an sealing array formation. He pointed to a red altar on the far side, telling Lin Ming and Mu Qianyu to follow him there.

As the door opened, Lin Ming felt a surging wave of heaven and earth origin energy rushing over him. The fire origin energy was so thick and pure that it was almost to the point of

substantialization!

If one practiced here, their cultivation would proceed at a breakneck pace!

“A stone altar made from Violent Fire Ore, suppressing the fire spirit vein of the land...” Mu Qianyu mumbled. Indeed, this place was a level above in comparison to cultivating at Divine Phoenix Island.

Seeing Mu Qianyu’s surprise, Ancestor Chi Yan also had a satisfied expression. He had absolute confidence in his own cultivation, and this was where he usually cultivated. The reason that he chose this cave mansion in this uninhabited mountain range was to place down the eight trigrams fire array formation here, but to also cultivate in this precious location.

This was the center of the mountain range’s fire spirit vein. The heaven earth origin energy here was thick to the point of manifesting. In addition, he had also spent a great deal of effort and time in order to carefully lay down an ancient spirit gathering array formation. This was definitely the cultivation holy land that all fire-attribute martial artists yearned for!

“Whether it is improving the eight trigrams fire array formation or forging a spear, none of these can be done in a day. You can cultivate here for now; if you need anything, just tell me.”

With that, Ancestor Chi Yan impatiently left, he couldn’t wait to contemplate his array formation.

Ka!

The wooden door slammed shut, and the sealing array formation on the door began to shine. All of the fire origin energy was completely contained within the room.

Mu Qianyu looked around the chamber. Not only was there the cultivation stone altar, but there were also daily necessities and other goods. There was even a bedroom on one side. Of course, there was only one bed.

But this didn't matter to Mu Qianyu. For those at her level, replacing sleep with meditation was simple and also a good idea. Not just that, but she wasn't used to using other's beds.

“Lin Ming, I estimate that the time that Ancestor Chi Yan needs to perfect the array formation and also complete the refining of the spear will be at least a month or two. During this time, you should study some of the Divine Phoenix Island fire cultivation methods with me; how about it?” After Mu Qianyu glanced around, she turned to Lin Ming and smiled. Although the master behind Lin Ming might be some Peerless Emperor, she didn't expect that she would form any relations with that person through Lin Ming. After all, that sort of existence was just too remote for someone like her.

Lin Ming hesitated and said, “Miss Mu, I plan on swallowing a Heaven Opening Pill first.”

Mu Qianyu was surprised, she said, “You want to take one now? I think it’s just a bit too early for you. A Heaven Opening Pill may be a top-grade medicine, but eating too many will affect your foundation, and you will also need to spend the time to consolidate your cultivation. It might be better if you wanted until you could attack the Houtian bottleneck before you take the Heaven Opening Pill.”

Mu Qianyu lightly said. Naturally she didn’t think that there would be any waste in Lin Ming taking the Heaven Opening Pill during the Pulse Condensation period.

“No, I’ve thought it over, I’ll take it now.”

As Lin Ming cultivated in recent days, he began to gradually realize just how distant a realm the Tempering Marrow boundary was. It was possible that there wouldn’t be much effect even if he took several Heaven Opening Pills, much less it having’ any sort of negative change on his foundation.

What he wanted to find out was, just how great of an effect would an ordinary Heaven Opening Pill have? How many Heaven Opening Pills would he need to fully complete Tempering Marrow?

Mu Qianyu didn’t try to sway Lin Ming. She was already accustomed to believing in Lin Ming. No matter what impossible matter Lin Ming tried, it seemed that if he decided to do it, it would never be impossible, and he would even be successful.

Mu Qianyu walked up, stroked back the hairs stuck on Lin Ming’s

forehead and said, "Then take it. I have a few bottles of Body Spiritual Ichor, and some other basic medicines. If you take them with the Heaven Opening Pill, the effects will be much better."

As Mu Qianyu said this, she turned her hand, and three crystal clear medicinal bottles appeared in her palm.

One had to pay attention when swallowing a Heaven Opening Pill. There were medicines that were able to direct the Heaven Opening Pill and allow it to display a superior efficacy. The Body Spiritual Ichor was only able to eliminate pill toxins to a certain degree.

Lin Ming received these bottles, and then downed the contents of all of them. Afterwards, he swallowed down that exquisite longan sized jade crystal like Heaven Opening Pill.

Afterwards, he sat down on the stone altar in meditation.

Once the Heaven Opening Pill entered his mouth, it melted, turning into a stream of heat that poured into his body, flowing into all of his meridians. A slight tingling feeling followed. Before this, Lin Ming knew that a major function of the Heaven Opening Pill was to wash the marrows and muscles, removing the foul Houtian air from the body. Of course, washing down the marrows and muscles was naturally an extremely painful and agonizing process.

As his meridians became increasingly hot, his four limbs actually became incomparably cold. This sort of alternating hot and cold

feeling was very uncomfortable.

As the drug efficacy melted into his body, the fluctuations of energy within his meridians became increasingly violent and brutal, running through Lin Ming's body and causing pain like he was being stabbed by countless needles. Even though he had previous experience with taking extremely strong medicines, he still tightly clenches his jaws in pain, drops of sweat dripping off of his forehead.

“Tempering Marrow...”

This thought echoed constantly in Lin Ming's mind. He gripped his fists, and with a nearly obsessive willpower, constantly forced the medicinal energy deep into his bones, sinking into his marrow...

Chapter 307 – Medicine Strength Washing Marrow

Although the Tempering Marrow boundary lay above the Pulse Condensation period, one didn't actually need to slowly reach the peak Pulse Condensation period before making a breakthrough to Tempering Marrow. To the contrary, to reach the Tempering Marrow boundary, it didn't matter whether one was at the early Pulse Condensation period or even the late Pulse Condensation period.

In other words, Tempering Marrow and Pulse Condensation were belonged to two completely different cultivation systems.

Tempering Marrow belonged to the Realm of the Gods' Body Transformation cultivation method.

As for the Pulse Condensation, Houtian, Xiantian, and Revolving Core realms, those belonged to the essence gathering cultivation system.

When a martial artist went from Strength Training to Flesh Training to Viscera Training to Altering Muscle and finally to Bone Forging, the true essence of one's body permeated deeper within, becoming more and more thorough. Afterwards, once true essence penetrated the marrow, that was Tempering Marrow.

Otherwise, true essence would flood through the body's meridians – this was called the Pulse Condensation period.

After Pulse Condensation, true essence would converge within the dantian by following along the meridians, and one would enter Houtian, Xiantian. Then, when that true essence became a core within the dantian, that would be the Revolving Core realm.

That is, the Tempering Marrow boundary ran parallel to the Pulse Condensation period.

Tempering Marrow laid the foundation for one to enter the Eight Inner Hidden Gates; this was Body Transformation.

But, once Pulse Condensation true essence penetrated through the meridians and converged into the dantian, this was laying the foundation for the essence gathering system.

However, reaching Pulse Condensation was easy, whereas Tempering Marrow was incomparably difficult. That was why normally one would reach the Pulse Condensation period first and then go onwards to the Tempering Marrow boundary.

This was what Lin Ming was doing now.

He followed the methods and principles found within the Tempering Marrow portion of the 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians' in order to forcefully control the medicinal efficacy and slowly penetrate it into the bone, bit by bit.

The Heaven Opening Pill's medicinal power was extremely

savage and violent. If a normal martial artist consumed the Heaven Opening Pill, they could only ease the way and slowly refine it. But if someone did the same as Lin Ming and tried to bind the Heaven Opening Pill's medicinal efficacy with their true essence and force it into the marrow, it would provoke a strong counterattack from the medicinal strength!

Lin Ming felt as if his blood had been replaced by burning lava; wherever it went, there would be a bone-biting pain!

“Lin Ming, are you alright...” As Mu Qianyu watched Lin Ming's appearance that seemed like he was in deep suffering, she was somewhat worried. If one's strength was insufficient, they might even die upon eating the Heaven Opening Pill. Since the ancient times, there had been Pulse Condensation period martial artists who wished to rush forwards, and after swallowing the Heaven Opening Pill they would suffer a horribly violent death because they could not fully digest the medicine's potency.

However, Mu Qianyu hadn't worried that this would happen to Lin Ming. After all, Lin Ming's strength was far above that. If he were placed within a small country, his strength would be equivalent to a late Houtian martial artist and above.

But now seeing Lin Ming's pained appearance, Mu Qianyu's heart stopped for a moment. Lin Ming's reaction was just too intense, it was beyond what she had imagined.

In absorbing the Heaven Opening Pill, it was useless for others to try to help. Mu Qianyu could only take a handkerchief and wipe away the sweat from Lin Ming's forehead.

In this touch, Mu Qianyu found that Lin Ming's forehead was burning with a raging heat.

“What's going on?” Mu Qianyu's eyebrows furrowed together. Was there an accident when he was trying to absorb the Heaven Opening Pill medicinal efficacy?

For a moment Mu Qianyu hesitated, thinking about whether she should use her own deep cultivation in order to forcefully compel the medicine out of Lin Ming's body. At this moment, Lin Ming waved his hand with some difficulty, clenched his teeth and said, “I... I'm alright...”

When he opened his mouth, Mu Qianyu saw that his teeth were stained red with blood.

It wasn't that Lin Ming couldn't withstand the medicinal efficacy of the Heaven Opening Pill, it was only that forcing true essence to enter the marrow was simply too difficult.

Lin Ming felt like his bones were an impregnable bastion. He stiffly forced a wisp of the Heaven Opening Pill's medicinal efficacy a bit at a time, but every time was as if his bones were being drilled into!

At first, Lin Ming had been stuck and at the peak Bone Forging stage for a long time. Finally, his true essence had naturally overflowed, resulting in a perfect breakthrough!

This course of action laid a solid foundation. But his bones had been hardened by the prolonged forging of true essence, and they were nearly perfect in density, without a single flaw.

But the more solid the skeleton was, the more difficult it was to penetrate the drug efficacy into the bone!

However, Lin Ming did not regret this a single bit.

The more difficult it was to break through, the more thorough and complete Tempering Marrow would be!

Only when the medicinal efficacy of the Heaven Opening Pill underwent purification through the dense bone would it achieve the best effect towards Tempering Marrow.

Lin Ming's philosophy was...

In order to lay a foundation, it must be laid in the most complete and solid manner.

In order to break through a boundary, it must be go through a perfect breakthrough!

After a quarter of an hour, Lin Ming's entire body was soaked in sweat. At this time, within his body, in his marrow, there was just the slightest tint of gold that was impossibly difficult to see!

Marrow like golden soup, that was the symbol of Tempering Marrow!

However, Lin Ming didn't even feel the slightest bit of joy, he only felt very depressed. This was because it was an incomparably small amount!

He had used up one fifth of the Heaven Opening Pill's medicinal efficacy, but he only managed to create such a tiny trace of Tempering Marrow that could hardly be seen. If he wanted to fully complete the process, he feared that he would need to repeat this whole process 10 or 20 thousand times. Could it be that in order to fully complete the Tempering Marrow boundary, he needed several thousand Heaven Opening Pills!?!?

Heavens!

Even if the rich and resourceful Divine Phoenix Island were to supply him with several thousand Heaven Opening Pills, he would probably die from stuffing himself with that many!

It had to be known that the Seven Profound Valleys only made between 20 and 30 Heaven Opening Pills every three years. On average, they had eight or nine Heaven Opening Pills every year. As for Divine Phoenix Island, they could make several dozen Heaven Opening Pills in one year. With this speed, it would still take Divine Phoenix Island over a hundred years to gather several thousand Heaven Opening Pills!

No matter how talented Lin Ming was, or how much of a monstrous genius he was, it would be impossible for Divine Phoenix Island to perform such an impossibly difficult feat for him and save up every single one of their Heaven Opening Pills for the next 100 years.

Not only that, but even if Divine Phoenix Island were willing, Lin Ming would not wait.

Was he destined not to fully complete the Tempering Marrow boundary?

Thinking about the Eight Inner Hidden Gates and Nine Stars of the Dao Palace recorded within the 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians', and the images of his feet cracking the earth, and his fist shattering stars, Lin Ming was unwilling to let this go. In any event, he would not give up on the Tempering Marrow boundary. As long as he had just a bit of hope, he would still manage to find a way.

He would do it bit by bit, slowly, and inexorably!

After shoring up his resolve, Lin Ming clenched his teeth and continued to absorb the leftover efficacy of the Heaven Opening Pill.

If Lin Ming used the Heaven Opening Pill on his entire body, there might not be any effect from the Tempering Marrow.

Although Lin Ming was rich, he wasn't wealthy to the point of gobbling up Heaven Opening Pills like candy. He couldn't accept eating up such a rare and precious Heaven Opening Pill and not gaining even the tiniest bit of growth in his strength.

Thinking this, Lin Ming used the techniques found within the 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians', revolving all of the true essence in his body and forcing every bit of drug efficacy into his right hand.

Since there wasn't any effect in tempering the entire body, then he might as well focus on tempering just a single spot!

Lin Ming chose his right hand. Whether it was the Body Tearing Bone Shattering Fist or using his spear, the right hand was the most critical part.

First he would temper his right hand, and then reconsider his options.

The medicinal efficacy rushed to his right hand like a tide. Under the oppression the medicine, Lin Ming's right hand felt as if a saber was being twisted into it. If it wasn't for the many body transformations that he had undergone within the Sorcerer Pagoda that made his body incomparably tough, his hand might have already exploded into bloody bits.

Then Lin Ming forced the medicinal efficacy into his right hand, it was truly difficult.

His entire right hand bulged red like a bag of blood, and the blue veins on his hand throbbed like massive earthworms, fiercely wriggling. Lin Ming fell over, pressing his right hand against his body as he barely held against the pain of the medicinal efficacy tempering his marrow. Beads of sweat tumbled down his hair, flowing to the ground.

Time passed slowly, and finally an hour passed. Lin Ming had finally refined most of the Heaven Opening Pill. At this time, he felt as if he were a weak newborn baby.

His true essence consumption had been too great. Lin Ming rolled over flat on the stone altar, taking great, heaving gasps.

Fortunately, this location was unique. With every breath, a great amount of fire origin energy entered his body, quickly being absorbed into the Heretical God Seed and moistening Lin Ming's dried meridians.

As he looked at his right hand, there was only the thinnest layer of pale gold that just skimmed over the surface of the bone marrow. Although this was far from achieving the boundary of marrow like golden soup, Lin Ming could still feel that this tiny part of his marrow was filled with an overwhelming blood vitality!

“Only a little marrow of my hand has the faintest hint of pale gold. Although there isn't any change in my forearm, it seems to be much redder...”

Lin Ming was speaking to himself. A human had two types of

marrow: the first was a yellow marrow, and the second was a red marrow. Only the red marrow could create blood.

When a baby was just born, its entire body was filled with red marrow that could create blood. But as one slowly aged, the bone cavity that held the red marrow gradually filled with fat, turning the red marrow into yellow marrow that could no longer produce blood.

The older a person was, the higher the proportion of yellow marrow would be, causing a person's blood vitality to be insufficient. That was why a baby's blood vitality was so much more vigorous and potent than the elderly's.

Lin Ming's right forearm had already changed into pure red bone marrow. If his entire body's marrow could change to pure red bone marrow, then the power of blood vitality would be much more robust, and whether it was endurance or resilience, all would be much more formidable!

"Lin Ming, are you alright?" Seeing that Lin Ming had finally regained consciousness, Mu Qianyu let out a breath of relief, handing over her handkerchief to him. She hadn't thought that Lin Ming would have such a brutal reaction after swallowing the Heaven Opening Pill.

"I'm alright." Lin Ming waved his hand and took the handkerchief that Mu Qianyu handed over. He found that this piece of cloth that contained a faint heavenly fragrance had already become dirty; obviously, this was because of him.

Lin Ming awkwardly smiled, abashed. He looked down and saw that his entire body was covered in a thick layer of greasy black oil. The Heaven Opening Pill was able to wash the marrows and muscles, a miracle cure that was able to remove the foul Houtian air. After eating one, one would naturally discharge impurities.

Lin Ming couldn't stand the sticky feeling of laying down in this grease. He said to Mu Qianyu, "I'm going to take a bath."

"Mm, go ahead."

At the back of Ancestor Chi Yan's cave was a deep pool that had been excavated. Lin Ming hurried there with long steps, and when he reached it, he didn't actually start removing his clothes to take a bath, but instead looked to see that no one was there, and then took a low-grade human-step treasure sword from his spatial ring.

Looking at the shining tip of the treasure sword, Lin Ming suddenly stretched out his right and grabbed the sword edge. He didn't use any true essence protection but just depended on the bare flesh of his palm, firmly digging his fingers into the treasure sword, kneading and twisting.

Zhi zhi zhi –

In the silence of the bathing pool, there was only the clear screeching sound of deforming metal. Lin Ming felt some slight pain in his hand, but his hand actually wasn't cut at all by the sword edge.

After several breaths, the low-grade human-step treasure sword was completely bent out of shape by Lin Ming. The blade had been twisted into a mess. This was a treasure sword that Huo Gong had made, and could also be considered among the top of all low-grade human-step treasures.

In other words, the toughness of Lin Ming's right hand had actually surpassed that of a low-grade human-step treasure!

Lin Ming had once depended on using Flow like Silk to 'meet a bare blade with an empty palm'. But now, he could actually twist a treasure sword without any true essence protection.

The dynamic strength of Lin Ming's right hand's flesh had actually reached such a degree. If he used it with his true essence, his defensive power would truly reach a terrifying level!

Not only that, but the stronger his bodily strength was, the stronger his attack strength would be. With a single punch, he would be able to crack rocks. It could be said that when that happened, Lin Ming's own body would become a treasure weapon.

Chapter 308 – Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle

The ‘Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians’ had stated that after going through Strength Training, Flesh Training, Viscera Training, Altering Muscle, and Bone Forging by tempering the body with true essence, the biggest impediment after that would be the human marrow. If the marrow is not tempered, it cannot be shocked, and it would be vulnerable to injury. This was the greatest weakness to Body Transformation martial artists.

But after the tempering of the marrow had been fully completed, not only would it eliminate this vulnerability, but it would also enhance the fusion of true essence and the body, within and without, true essence would be seamlessly unified from all directions. Only when this was achieved could one attain the most stable and perfect stage.

Lin Ming stood near the deep pool and continued to revolve the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’, feeling the Tempering Marrow boundary. After this change in his hand, the true essence really did unify, and had experienced a qualitative leap.

The ‘Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians’ was right, but as Lin Ming thought of the exceedingly harsh conditions necessary to fully complete Tempering Marrow, he felt a headache creeping up. If things continued like this, he would probably have to reach the Revolving Core realm before he had the strength to collect the pills he needed to finish Tempering Marrow.

Although Tempering Marrow belonged to a completely different

cultivation system from the essence gathering system, it was still better to break through sooner. At least, the best outcome would be if he could do so before he turned 20.

But no matter how heaven defying a talent one was, it was impossible to reach the Revolving Core realm before 20 years of age. After, it would still take an unknown amount of time to collect the materials he needed. If he missed the best time to temper his marrow, then his marrow would age, and it would become much more difficult to fully complete Tempering Marrow.

Just how should he proceed?

Lin Ming quickly took a bath, taking a spare set of clothes from his spatial ring, and then returned to the cultivation chamber.

Mu Qianyu saw Lin Ming come back, his hair slicked back and wet, a new set of clean clothes on, and looking quite refreshed and gallant. She finally breathed a sigh of relief. “Lin Ming, did you take the Heaven Opening Pill to wash your marrow and muscles? I think that you released a very small amount of impurities.”

The Heaven Opening Pill had an extremely dominant power to wash the marrow and muscle, especially when used by earthly martial artists. They would often discharge thick layers of gray sludge, but Lin Ming only discharged a bit of the foul Houtian air. This was why Mu Qianyu had asked.

“Mm... I ate it.” Lin Ming awkwardly nodded. When he had taken the Heaven Opening Pill, 90% of the medicinal efficacy had

been used by him for Tempering Marrow; the little bit left behind was in his meridians. He hadn't used any to wash his marrow and muscles.

Mu Qianyu's eyes swept Lin Ming from head to toe, and finally gave a satisfied nod, saying, "I don't think your cultivation rose by much. Probably, the medicinal efficacy is hiding somewhere in your body. But you don't need to worry about that. After you take the Heaven Opening Pill, you only need to go into seclusion for a period to slowly pull out and absorb the power of the medicine. After that, your strength should be able to break through to the middle Pulse Condensation period, or maybe even the late Pulse Condensation period. But this type of cultivation doesn't come from practice, so it's best if you also spend a good period of time consolidating in order to have the best result. If you eat another Heaven Opening Pill before you reach the Houtian realm, it probably won't do you much good. It's simply not worth it."

"Uh... I, um, I understand." Lin Ming half-heartedly smiled. After such a lie, he also had to use more lies to conceal his last lies. Where was there any leftover medicinal efficacy in his body? All of it had already been cleanly sucked out. His cultivation hadn't risen by much, and he was still quite far from reaching the middle Pulse Condensation period.

Mu Qianyu beckoned Lin Ming over and said, "Lin Ming, sit down over here, I want to test your fire origin energy fusion compatibility."

Lin Ming hesitated, and then nodded. He sat cross-legged in front of Mu Qianyu. He didn't know just what the standards were for

Sky Spill Continent or what grade of fire origin energy fusion compatibility he had.

“Relax your body. Don’t try to purposely control the way your body absorbs fire origin energy.”

Mu Qianyu took hold of Lin Ming’s hand and then closed her eyes. Then, Lin Ming felt a strange fluctuation of fire origin energy in his body, as true essence entered into him. He absorbed the true essence, letting it judge just what grade his fusion compatibility with fire was.

Maybe it was because the fire origin energy in the room was too rich, but when Mu Qianyu sat on the altar, she slightly perspired, releasing an extremely delightful and alluring fragrance. Since Lin Ming was so close to Mu Qianyu and they were facing each other, he was somewhat distracted.

A moment later, Mu Qianyu opened her eyes, a bit of disappointment on her face. “You are maybe an inferior sixth-grade fusion compatibility...”

A martial artist that had this degree of fusion compatibility with any element was already heaven defying, much less Lin Ming who was a double-attribute. His thunder origin energy fusion compatibility was definitely higher.

But Mu Qianyu was still a bit dissatisfied. Divine Phoenix Island’s cultivation method had extremely harsh requirements of fire origin energy fusion compatibility. For instance, Mu Qianyu’s fire

origin energy fusion compatibility was a superior seventh-grade that absolutely defied the will of the heavens!

A sixth-grade fusion compatibility was just at the barest standard to study the core cultivation methods. However, if Lin Ming wanted to achieve the highest levels of this cultivation method, it would probably be impossible.

Mu Qianyu felt a great deal of regret. Besides his fire attribute, Mu Qianyu didn't have much in common with Lin Ming's other strengths. The only thing that could strengthen the bond between her and Lin Ming were the cultivation methods of Divine Phoenix Island.

"Inferior sixth-grade?" Lin Ming wasn't surprised. Although the Heretical God Seed was amazing, all of the other strengths of his body had no connection to the fire attribute, so of course he wouldn't have a fire origin energy fusion compatibility that defied the heavens.

'I wonder what will happen when I take that super valuable spear that Ancestor Chi Yan is refining, and then go to the Southern Wilderness to eliminate the Fire Worm Shaman. After I absorb the Eternal Flame Flame Essence, just what degree of fusion compatibility will my fire attribute reach?'

The greatest and most distinct feature that the Heretical God Force had in comparison to normal martial artists was that it had the capabilities to evolve and grow. Because Lin Ming had absorbed the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder, his thunder origin energy fusion compatibility absolutely surpassed a mere

inferior sixth-grade.

This was the strange and unbelievable power of the Heretical God Force. Lin Ming sighed. The Heretical God Force was too powerful. It was no wonder that the Supreme Elder from the Realm of the Gods had taken this secret skill as the most precious one he had ever obtained in his lifetime, even above the ‘Golden Roc Shattering the Void’.

Not only that, but even though the ‘Golden Roc Shattering the Void’ was extremely rare and precious, there were still some other people who knew about it in the Realm of the Gods. But the Heretical God Force was actually unique; this secret skill was obtained in some ancient ruins, and was probably created by some archaic Evil God.

When that Supreme Elder had discovered the Heretical God Force, it had already been sealed for a countless number of years. Afterwards, the Supreme Elder had carefully kept this secret skill hidden without leaking any details of it. This made it even more precious.

Unfortunately, that Supreme Elder of the Realm of the Gods hadn’t been able to thoroughly study and research the Heretical God Force in detail. He had only practiced it to the third layer, and then he followed Tian Mingzi to the Verdant Feather Holy Lands to steal the Divine Crystal Magic Cube, finally dying with his soul shattered.

Now, discovering any new information on the Heretical God Force depended on Lin Ming’s own luck and ability. He stumbled

onto the fact that it responded to thunder and fire attribute origin energy, but as for the other types such as earth, ice, wood, water, or anything else, he had no idea how to utilize those different types of origin energy.

Mu Qianyu looked at Lin Ming then hesitated, saying, “Lin Ming, would you be willing to study Divine Phoenix Island’s fire attribute cultivation methods?”

Lin Ming nodded, “I’d like to try.”

The cultivation methods of Divine Phoenix Island were naturally far inferior to the cultivation methods that the Supreme Elder knew in the Realm of the Gods. However, although the Supreme Elder’s cultivation methods were amazing, they didn’t suit him. At best, there were just a few cultivation methods in the memories, and he couldn’t choose a specific direction that he wanted to go in.

In the past, Lin Ming had wanted to study a thunder attribute cultivation method in order to make up for his lack of speed. But, to find a high-grade thunder attribute cultivation method manual within the Sky Spill Continent was much easier said than done. On the other hand, Divine Phoenix Island’s cultivation methods were already considered to be at the top.

“Lin Ming, your true essence is far thicker and purer than that of a martial artist at the same level, and your body also has several special places within it. I think that you have already studied some sort of top quality cultivation method from your master. Although I don’t know what sort of cultivation method it is, I have to say that the amazing cultivation methods of Divine Phoenix Island

won't lose out to any other fire attribute cultivation method." These days, Mu Qianyu had spent a great deal of time with Lin Ming. With her cultivation and great eyesight, she was able to see that there were many unusual aspects about Lin Ming's body. However, she didn't ask about these, as every powerhouse had their own secrets to keep.

"But, since you haven't formally joined Divine Phoenix Island, the most I can pass on to you is the first few layers. Before I pass this onto you, you must swear that you will not leak these cultivation methods." Mu Qianyu looked at Lin Ming with a very serious and solemn expression in her eyes, her each and every syllable pronounced clearly and loudly.

"I swear upon my heart of martial arts, that if I do not have Divine Phoenix Island's permission, I will not divulge anything." Lin Ming took an oath without hesitating. Every sect had their own inheritances and legacies that were equivalent to their lifeblood. These inheritances and legacies were the fundamental basis for every sect.

"Good. Then, this cultivation method is called the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle'. It originates from the ancient Phoenix Clan. Unfortunately... this cultivation method has a flaw, otherwise, even the few Holy Lands of Sky Spill Continent might covet it."

As Mu Qianyu spoke, she heaved a great sigh. The ancient Phoenix Clan had the bloodline of a Phoenix – that was a true God Beast. It wasn't an existence that a Vermillion Bird or any other Saint Beast could compare with. Since they had left behind a

cultivation method, the terrifying fearsomeness of its power could be imagined.

“The two great core cultivation methods of Divine Phoenix Island are the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ and the ‘Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code’. More than half has been lost, otherwise Divine Phoenix Island would have already become a Holy Land! Even though these two cultivation methods have flaws, their formidable power already surpasses many core cultivation methods of fifth-grade sects. If one wishes to study these two sets of cultivation methods to the core boundary, one needs the bloodline of the Vermillion Bird or Blue Lian. Otherwise, the fifth-grade sects would have already long rampaged and plundered Divine Phoenix Island.

“It is said that with the complete secret texts of the ancient Phoenix race, if one cultivated their manuals to the highest realm, then one’s body could become like a Phoenix, rebirthing through nirvana in a sea of flames, immortal and indestructible...”

As Mu Qianyu spoke, Lin Ming was shocked.

One’s body could become like a Phoenix, rebirthing through nirvana in a sea of flames, immortal and indestructible?

If what Mu Qianyu said wasn’t an exaggeration, then the secret texts of this ancient Phoenix Clan were no worse than the top cultivation methods within the Realm of the Gods, and might also be tied with the Heretical God Force that was left behind by an archaic Evil God!

Of course, the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ and the ‘Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code’ were just a small part of the ancient Phoenix Clan’s secret texts, and most of it was missing, flawed.

Alas, these was how things were. Still, Lin Ming’s heart couldn’t help but stir and he asked, “Miss Mu said that in order to practice these cultivation methods to the core boundary, I will need the bloodline of a Vermillion Bird or Blue Luan. Does that mean that I cannot cultivate these methods?”

Mu Qianyu sighed. Even if Lin Ming had the bloodline of a Vermillion Bird, he was limited by his fire origin energy fusion compatibility; there was no way he would be able to cultivate it to the highest level.

Mu Qianyu said, “Divine Phoenix Island has a secret technique to transplant part of a Saint Beast’s bloodline into you. However, if the bloodline is too thin, it will be insufficient to study the most core section of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. Only if...” As Mu Qianyu spoke, she suddenly fell silent, her face flashing with the color of embarrassment.

Chapter 309 – Child of Flame

“Only if what?” Lin Ming asked, puzzled.

“Mm... nothing, forget about it.” Mu Qianyu awkwardly said as she shook her head, “Let’s start.”

Mu Qianyu tried to switch topics, but Lin Ming could actually see a faint pink blush creeping up behind Mu Qianyu’s ears, causing him to be surprised. However, Mu Qianyu seemed to only reluctantly mention this so-called ‘what if’. It was best if he didn’t press her on the topic.

“This is a jade slip that contains the first layer of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. First, look at the cultivation method and then I’ll help you get started. Afterwards you can officially begin practicing.”

Mu Qianyu took out a flame-colored jade slip from her spatial ring. Creating a cultivation method jade slip was a very difficult task. First, one had to reach the Large Success stage of the cultivation method and personally master and create it in order for it to work. The fact that Mu Qianyu could carry around a jade slip of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ and look through it at any time was naturally because of her status as a Saintess.

Lin Ming received the jade slip and extended his soul force into it. Suddenly, his heart stirred. This was an ancient manual that unified cultivation methods and martial skills. But the first secret

skill caused Lin Ming's to burst with joy. This was a technique to control fire!

The Heretical God Seed was astoundingly strong, and it had the ability to absorb fire. It could even grow strong by hunting other Flame Essences. However, the method to manipulate fire was actually up to Lin Ming to research on his own.

Although Lin Ming had great perception, it was still impossible for him to naturally self-learn how to manipulate fire. With the inspiration he obtained from the Thunderbolt Devilfire Bead, Lin Ming was able to create his own skill, Thunderfire Annihilation. But, his other methods of controlling fire were of the most superficial and basic kind, and that was mostly to use a flame and directly burn the enemy.

But this jade slip actually contained a great deal of methods to control fire.

For instance, there were methods to create flame armor, flame shields, flame guards, flame ropes, flame compression, and many other techniques. In addition to directly controlling fire, there were also special methods such as using fire to place seals on treasure, increase the power of treasure, and many other secret skills that were of great interest to Lin Ming.

This part of how to control fire was enough to make Lin Ming's heart move just thinking about the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle'.

While Lin Ming focused his time on studying this jade slip, Mu Qianyu sat in meditation on the side and practiced. She occasionally had some strange feelings well within her.

If one wished to cultivate the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ or the ‘Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code’ to the highest level, then one needed to have an extremely rich and pure bloodline of either the Vermillion Bird or the Blue Luan.

But Divine Phoenix Island’s special method of transplanting bloodlines, in truth, was only drawing blood from the body of the Vermillion Bird or Blue Luan Saint Beasts and then using a special arcane skill to inject it into someone’s body. In addition, this blood of the Vermillion Bird or Blue Luan was very diluted and weak, it was far from being of sufficient purity.

But, there was an exception...

That was to take up intimate relations with those of Divine Phoenix Island who had the richest bloodline of the Saint Beast, and obtain their Primordial Yin energy. By doing so, they could obtain a very pure and rich Saint Beast bloodline and gain the ability to cultivate the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ or the ‘Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code’ to the highest level.

But this so-called ‘individual’ with the richest Saint Beast bloodline was in truth the Saintess of Divine Phoenix Island. In other words, it was Mu Qianyu and her little sister, Mu Bingyun.

This matter was known only to a select few. Divine Phoenix Island would do anything in order to avoid this secret from spreading, because if it did, it would certainly invite a bloody disaster upon their sect. Once, long ago, there was a demonic man who used a fire attribute cultivation method. He captured the Saintess of Divine Phoenix Island, and had wished to violate her and obtain her Primordial Yin energy so that he could cultivate the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. Because of this, a calamity was brought down upon Divine Phoenix Island.

This ‘only if’ was something that was unspeakable for Mu Qianyu.

Like this, the two of them fell into their monotonous cultivation. Lin Ming was deeply immersed within the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, while Mu Qianyu quietly meditated, absorbing the rich fire origin energy.

Mu Qianyu estimated that with Lin Ming’s monstrous perception, it would take him maybe less than half an hour to completely memorize and comprehend a small part of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. It was a pity that Lin Ming’s fire origin energy fusion compatibility was his constraint; there was no way to make up for this no matter how high his perception was.

‘Such a pity... I hope that he doesn’t give up on the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. That would be nice...’ Mu Qianyu subconsciously hoped that Lin Ming was able to cultivate the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ to the highest level. Like this, he would truly become a disciple of Divine Phoenix

Island.

But this was impossible.

Only if...

Thinking this, Mu Qianyu automatically blushed. Although she had experienced some ambiguous and strange experiences with Lin Ming, in her eyes, she had never thought of Lin Ming like that. In her eyes, Lin Ming was just too young.

Mu Qianyu was 27, and Lin Ming was 16. To those Revolving Core masters that had an prolonged youth, an 11 year difference was nothing. But to the current Mu Qianyu, Lin Ming was simply a young boy.

Not only that, but Mu Qianyu had never thought that she would involve herself with the intimate matters between men and women. Maintaining her pure virgin body and Primordial Yin energy was also of great benefit to her own cultivation.

Maybe it was because the room was too hot, or she had sat for too long, but Mu Qianyu felt a bit uncomfortable. She readied herself to go and take a bath. Mu Qianyu was a woman who loved to stay clean, bathing daily was already a long formed habit of hers.

She turned around to glance at Lin Ming, he was completely engrossed in the jade slip. Then Mu Qianyu quietly left...

.....

“Martial artists cannot directly control fire... they must unify the fire origin energy that can control fire with their own true essence, and through this combination control fire...”

As Lin Ming thought aloud, he clasped his hands together and then slowly opened his palms. A small fire snake appeared in his palms. As he revolved his true essence according to the methods inscribed within the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, the fire snake in Lin Ming’s palms began to become slimmer, longer, and more condensed. Finally, it was like a real-life snake.

Under the absolute suppressive power of the Heretical God Seed, the normally savage fire origin energy had become surprisingly docile. Lin Ming was able to knead it and move it around just like a ball of dough.

“Just a bit more...”

Lin Ming continued to revolve the true essence in his body. Finally, the two fire snakes within his palms turned into red flaming chains that linked together.

In the next moment, the flames completely converged together, and the chains seemed to gain substance. There was almost no difference between these flame chains and red hot iron chains!

“I did it!”

Lin Ming was extremely joyous. He withdrew the Heavy Profound Soft Spear from his spatial ring, and then attached the flame chains directly onto the end of the spear. Suddenly, his Heavy Profound Soft Spear had turned into a chained spear!

“Go!”

Lin Ming used his strength and threw the 1200 jins Heavy Profound Soft Spear. The spear flew out like an arrow, and the chains suddenly tightened.

Peng!

With a bang, the Heavy Profound Soft Spear smashed into the cave mansion wall's protective array formation, causing a shimmering light curtain to appear.

The array formation that Ancestor Chi Yan had laid down in his cave mansion was naturally not something that Lin Ming was able to damage.

At this moment, Mu Qianyu finished bathing and returned to the room. As she walked in, she just happened to see with her own wide eyes the flaming chain in Lin Ming's hand that looked no different to a real chain. Mu Qianyu's eyes went perfectly round. If she didn't feel the rich fire origin energy coming from the red chains, she would have thought that they were true chains.

“You... you already learned how to form flame chains?”

Mu Qianyu found this difficult to believe. Creating a flame chain was much more difficult than forming a flame shield or flame armor. Even Mu Qianyu had spent an entire day in order to learn how to do this, but Lin Ming had actually done it in the time that she had bathed?

How could this be so quick!?!?

Lin Ming’s fire origin energy fusion compatibility was far inferior to hers!

“Mm...” Lin Ming nodded. Seeing Mu Qianyu’s shocked expression, he figured that he probably did something extraordinary and amazing. But he had done this sort of thing often enough, so he didn’t think it mattered if he did it a few more times.

In truth, a flame chain was just true essence manifestation, similar to thunder manifestation where energy itself was condensed into substance. Lin Ming knew that his ability to easily control fire origin energy stemmed from the overwhelming power of the Heretical God Seed. This Heretical God Seed could even suppress an earth-grade Thunder Soul like the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder; forcing some fire origin energy into submission was just a joke.

Mu Qianyu was left speechless. She had personally determined Lin Ming’s fire origin energy fusion compatibility. She had

thought that Lin Ming would encounter many difficulties and problems in learning the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, but she didn’t imagine that in just less than half an hour, Lin Ming would already be playing around with flame chains...

Heavens!

What a monster!

This sort of monstrous perception simply couldn’t be rationalized through common sense. Mu Qianyu could only attribute Lin Ming’s ability to control flame to his terrifying perception. After all, the technique for controlling fire was still a skill, and it would depend on one’s own perception to comprehend it.

As Mu Qianyu thought this, she eliminated the doubt in her heart. But then a series of matters happened that caused her mouth to twitch over and over again.

Half an hour later, the flame in Lin Ming’s hand turned into a crimson shield.

Then, after another half an hour, a deep ruby red armor appeared around Lin Ming.

Then, after another hour, Lin Ming turned a ball of flames into a series of mystical runes, branding them onto the Heavy Profound

Soft Spear, turning the originally silver long spear into a luminescent red.

.....

At this time, Mu Qianyu was already numbed senseless.

She didn't know what expression to make to express her feelings. She finally understood why Lin Ming was able to comprehend ancient array formations at a tender age of 16, to a degree at which he formed theories that made even that crazy kook Ancestor Chi Yan dance with happiness.

Lin Ming's perception was something that a human shouldn't have.

She had thought that she would let Lin Ming take a look at the jade slip first and then help direct him into her sect and smooth the path of cultivation for him. Now, it seemed that her thoughts were just a funny joke.

However, what Mu Qianyu didn't know was that these awe-inspiring miracles had just begun.

Two days later, when Lin Ming began to truly start practicing the source cultivation method of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Record', his practice speed bamboozled Mu Qianyu once more.

As Lin Ming sat in meditation, a thick twisting vortex of origin energy had already started to swirl around him, and all of the incomparably rich and pure fire origin energy in the surroundings was continuously gathered into this vortex. It was just like a giant whale sucking in water!

A terrifying amount of fire origin energy flowed into Lin Ming's body, without even a tiny bit leaking out. It was as if Lin Ming's body was a bottomless pit; once it went in, nothing came out. How much fire origin there was, was how much was absorbed.

This fearsome origin energy absorption rate caused Mu Qianyu to be shocked. How could Lin Ming's fire origin energy fusion compatibility only be a measly inferior sixth-grade?

'Something's not right. The technique to control fire partially depends on one's perception. If one has good perception, then having a fast practice speed isn't strange. But, to cultivate the source cultivation depended only on one's fusion compatibility with fire. If the fusion grade isn't high enough, then it's useless even with amazing perception! But Lin Ming's current cultivation speed...'

Mu Qianyu was alarmed. Lin Ming's cultivation speed violated the rules of the world. It was just like the legendary child of flame that was born within the ashes of infernos. A martial artist had to use their true essence to control fire, but a child of flame could suppress fire itself into submission.

Chapter 310 – Divine Spear Complete

At this time, Lin Ming who was cultivating didn't know what Mu Qianyu was thinking, nor did he know that his cultivation speed was far too exaggerated for someone who should have a sixth-grade fire origin energy fusion compatibility.

Lin Ming had already entered into the ethereal martial intent state and sealed off his six senses, completely immersed in the happy feelings that came with cultivation.

The 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians' was naturally an unbelievably marvelous cultivation method with a thousand benefits. However, it was only a Body Transformation cultivation method. Above Tempering Marrow was the Eight Inner Hidden Gates and the Nine Stars of the Dao Palace.

This cultivation system couldn't be used to break through to the Houtian realm or Xiantian realm.

Lin Ming wanted to open the Eight Inner Hidden Gates and the Nine Stars of the Dao Palace, but he wasn't planning on giving up on reaching Houtian, Xiantian, and the Revolving Core realms.

So Lin Ming had been missing an essence gathering cultivation system to cultivate his true essence. The 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' just happened to fill in this missing space.

Although this cultivation method had many flaws, because of the

presence of the Heretical God Seed, all of the fire attribute fire origin energy around Lin Ming was as docile as sheep, freely allowing Lin Ming to manipulate it in any way he wanted. Because of this, Lin Ming could cultivate the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ with half the effort and twice the results. This was simply a cultivation method that was tailored towards Lin Ming’s strengths!

When Mu Qianyu had first cultivated the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ she had reached Pulse Condensation at 15, Houtian at 17, Xiantian at 22, extreme Xiantian at 26, and now at 27 years of age, she was a half-step into the Revolving Core realm!

Lin Ming’s current cultivation speed of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ was far inferior to Mu Qianyu, someone who possessed a truly terrifying superior seventh-grade fire origin energy fusion compatibility. Even if Lin Ming possessed the Heretical God Speed, that was a speed that he couldn’t hope to reach.

But the greatest advantage of the Heretical God Seed was that it could grow. What would happen once he absorbed another Flame Essence?

If that happened, the Lin Ming’s cultivation speed would constantly increase, and in the future, he might even surpass Mu Qianyu!

Thinking this, Lin Ming was increasingly hungry for the Fire Worm Tribe’s Flame Essence. If the Southern Wilderness wasn’t so

far away, he would have probably wouldn't have waited for the spear and directly paid a visit to the Fire Worm Tribe.

Because of the incomparably rich and pure fire origin energy, the top quality cultivation method 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle', in addition to the perfect fit of the Heretical God Seed in assisting him with the cultivation method, Lin Ming's cultivation speed would be able to progress at 10,000 miles per day. 10 days later, his cultivation had already reached the peak of the early Pulse Condensation period.

Of course, this was also partly due to the amazing merits of the Heaven Opening Pill.

On this day, there was suddenly an extremely loud explosion sound outside of the cave mansion, so forceful that even the protective array formation fiercely trembled. Lin Ming and Mu Qianyu didn't know what happened, so they hurriedly ran out of the cave mansion, and saw a disheveled and messy Ancestor Chi Yan doing a jiggy dance in joy.

"Haha, I did it, I finally did it!"

Seeing Ancestor Chi Yan like this, Mu Qianyu breathed a sigh of relief. She didn't know whether to laugh or to cry; for a moment, she even thought that the entire eight trigrams fire array formation had imploded.

"Haha, Nephew Lin, you came at just the right time. What do you think about my great array formation now?" Ancestor Chi Yan

waved behind himself. Because he had been continually working night and day for the last 10 days to perfect his array formation, Ancestor Chi Yan was covered in soot and dirt, most of his robe burnt black. He looked like the crazy old hermit he was.

Lin Ming looked at Ancestor Chi Yan's eyes that shined with an aberrant light, and gulped. He nodded, "It's um... very good. Perfect."

"Haha, today – no, tomorrow, I will forge the best spear for you! First, I must rest for the evening and adjust my condition to its best form!"

.....

The next morning –

All the materials were placed atop the stone altar. There was the 10,000 year Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo, the 10,000 year Sacred Flame Parasol Tree, a little bit of crystallized fire that was left behind after a Vermillion Bird underwent nirvana, a palm-sized piece of Purple Comet Divine Metal, and about 20 jins of Profound Thunder Stone. These were the main materials to forge the spear.

Every one of these main materials was an absolutely top quality material, any piece enough to make even a Revolving Core powerhouse green with envy. With so many rare materials together, Mu Qianyu was unable to help sighing. This was simply too luxurious, even for her.

Ancestor Chi Yan saw so many top quality materials and his face shined red with joy. With these materials, in addition to the newly evolved eight trigrams fire array formation, he had absolute faith that he would be able to create the best work in his refining career!

With the experience of creating a top-grade weapon, he would also have a better grasp of forging a heaven-step treasure in the future.

Ancestor Chi Yan tied back his crazily scattered hair, and then spat out a cloud of dark green and purple flame. When this cloud of fire appeared, it was like the air had been lit on fire; the surrounding temperature dramatically surged by an alarming degree.

Lin Ming's pupils constricted. That dark green and purple flame was without a doubt a Flame Essence. It should be Ancestor Chi Yan's life's Flame Essence. In terms of how formidable it was, it was probably above the medium-grade earth-step.

Lin Ming had no understanding of how a Flame Essence would be above the medium-grade earth-step, he could only guess.

At this time, Mu Qianyu confirmed Lin Ming's thoughts. She looked at that the dark green and purple flame and exclaimed in praise, "That is the Silent Nine Emerald Flame, a high-grade earth-step Flame Essence!"

The reason that Ancestor Chi Yan could walk with impunity

throughout the entire South Horizon Region was, to a great extent, because of this high-grade earth-step Flame Essence.

The Silent Nine Emerald Flame shot out, fusing into the eight trigrams fire array formation. The flames suddenly turned into a dark green and purple, the temperature rising to an absolutely horrifying degree.

Ancestor Chi Yan first took out the supplementary spear casting materials. This included a massive amount of Aged Gold, Cold Star Iron, and Wrought Gold Heavy Water. These wouldn't be used to cast the spear, but would only play a catalytic opening role.

The Aged Gold, Cold Star Iron, as well as the Purple Comet Divine Metal were all thrown into the flames. The Aged Gold and Cold Star Iron only took a brief moment before they melted into a muddle of mixed molten metal. Once the Wrought Gold Heavy Water and another batch of supplementary materials were thrown in, it became a boiling cauldron of molten metals.

Then, Ancestor Chi Yan took out the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo and the Sacred Flame Parasol Tree, immersing them into the boiling molten metal so that these two spiritual woods could absorb the metal essence.

Throughout all of this, the Purple Comet was still in the flame, completely motionless.

Ancestor Chi Yan constantly inputted origin energy into the eight trigrams fire array formation. With the addition of fire origin

energy from the Primal Chaos Heavens, this massive fire array formation burned for over four hours.

Purple Comet was a material that could just qualify as being worthy to create a heaven-step treasure. After it had stayed in the burning flames for such a long time, it still didn't show the slightest hint of melting.

Ancestor Chi Yan took a high-grade true essence stone, and began to absorb the true essence stone's origin energy, while simultaneously taking out a purple pill from his spatial ring and tossing it into the flames. As the purple pill fused into the flames, it immediately turned into a drop of liquid that penetrated into the Purple Comet Divine Metal.

With a 'chi chi' sound, the Purple Comet finally began to soften under the effects of the purple pill.

“Huo!”

Ancestor Chi Yan took out a massive crimson hammer from his spatial ring. He flooded this hammer with true essence, and began to repeatedly smash down on the softened Purple Comet Divine Metal, with heavy pounding motions.

Just this large crimson hammer was already a medium-grade earth-step treasure.

Wind whistled, flames twirled.

Ancestor Chi Yan stripped off his robe, revealing a naked upper body that was tightly corded in solid muscle. Just looking at this muscle, there was no way one would think it was the body of an old man.

Clang!

Clang!

Clang!

.....

The sound of metal clashing against metal reverberated throughout the entire mountain range. Even Lin Ming, who was standing nearby felt his blood begin to boil and his heart rise with passion as he watched. The beauty and majesty of this absolute power was truly shocking.

Refining Purple Comet and removing the impurities was an arduous and exceedingly difficult process. Ancestor Chi Yan's entire body was streaming with sweat, and even the Aged Gold anvil under the Purple Comet was smashed apart.

Lin Ming exclaimed in his heart. This Aged Gold anvil was definitely an extraordinary object, and yet it was smashed apart by Ancestor Chi Yan to such a degree. The tenacity of the Purple Comet and its ability to withstand impact could be imagined.

After an entire day and night, after countless hammerings, the originally palm-sized piece of Purple Comet was finally small enough, just the right size to forge a spearhead.

The Purple Comet served as the foundation core of the spearhead, and then the Vermillion Bird crystallized fire was ground into powder and used to permeate the Purple Comet.

The 20 jins of Profound Thunder Stone was refined into its most basic essence by the Silent Nine Emerald Flame, and then also cast into the foundation core.

With a top thunder and fire material integrated into the spearhead, the hammering continued!

The giant hammer smashing into the Purple Comet became increasingly frequent. The wind picked up, and the surrounding fire origin energy actually turned into a massive vortex.

With every hit, sparks would splash out, arcs of bright electricity would shine, and that foundation core was gradually hammered into the shape of a thin spearhead.

Chi chi chi!

Ancestor Chi Yan sunk the spearhead into a giant bath of Glacial Ice Divine Spring. That originally freezing cold Glacial Ice Divine Spring actually started to boil, emitting massive clouds of steam.

This sort of divine water was extremely precious. The Refiner Faction Sovereign had once spent a great price in order to obtain some Glacial Ice Divine Spring, so that his son Huo Yanluo could soak in it, and depend on this to jump realms and absorb a medium-grade human-step Flame Essence.

Now, this great amount of Glacial Ice Divine Spring was actually used by Ancestor Chi Yan as a hardening agent.

After the quenching was complete, up to now, only the spearhead had been finished. A top quality treasure spear had to be thoroughly hammered nine by nine times for a total of 81 times. The first time hammering was the longest. Afterwards, the amount of time would be reduced, but the total time would always amount to around 20 days or so.

During this period, a reigning master would have to continually consume a high degree of strength. Sometimes, they would not only consume their true essence, but their life energy!

In order to refine a top treasure, a refining master needed to put forth his entire effort and soul. After a long period of time, there were some refining masters that would overtax their life to forge a treasure, and finally end up perishing!

Therefore, to request a refining master to forge a spear with all of their ability was very difficult. If it wasn't for Lin Ming assisting Ancestor Chi Yan in such a great manner, there was no way that he would have helped him forge a top class divine spear.

Time slowly passed, day by day.

Every day, Lin Ming would come over and take a look at Ancestor Chi Yan. But besides this, he spent all of his time cultivating. At this point, his cultivation was slowly reaching the middle Pulse Condensation period.

Finally, on the 20th day, the spearhead and spear shaft integrated into a perfect whole.

The long spear shaft was 10 feet long. It had the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo as the bone, and the surface was twined with the tree silk of the Sacred Flame Parasol Tree. It was both flexible and incomparably difficult to destroy.

With the spear shaft complete, Ancestor Chi Yan started to fully concentrate on drawing the array formation upon the divine spear.

At this moment, in the sky, thunder flashed, and clouds of fire gathered.

The peak of the mountain was the Primal Chaos Heavens. Above the Primal Chaos Heavens, the seven origin energy elements of metal, wood, water, fire, earth, thunder, and wind were in a free state, savage, brutal, and active.

At this moment, the thunder attribute and fire attribute origin energy seemed to be drawn in by some unknown law, gathering

together.

Bang!

With a deafening explosion, the Primal Chaos Heavens were ripped apart as if it were the work of some divine hand, and a massive pillar of fire and thunder shot down, bombarding the divine spear!

Ancestor Chi Yan was completely focused on his work, and his physical strength had already been drawn to the limit. He gave a stuffy cough as his entire body was twined with purple lightning and flames, and he tumbled off the stone altar.

“Senior Chi Yan!” Lin Ming was shocked, he quickly ran forwards.

However at this time, Ancestor Chi Yan, whose entire body was burnt black, began to maniacally laugh, the pearly white teeth of his wide smile contrasting against his blackened appearance. “The heavens help me! The heavens help me! A divine weapon is born, bringing forth twin fire and thunder tribulation from the heavens! This is this old man’s best work by far!”

Chapter 311 – Return to the Southern Wilderness

“The spear! Let me have a look!” Ancestor Chi Yan grabbed the treasure spear from Lin Ming’s hand, closely inspecting it. The base of the spear shaft was a deep purple, it was the color of the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo. Around the spear shaft, there were also a countless number of thin red lines. This was the symbol of the fusion between the Sacred Flame Parasol Tree and the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo.

The spearhead was eight inches long, with an high ridge and thin blade, gleaming with a cold light. The spearhead was a fusion of the Purple Comet Divine Metal, the Vermillion Bird’s crystallized fire and Profound Thunder Stone. Not only was it incomparably keen and hard, it was very compatible with thunder and fire, suiting Lin Ming.

The entire spear, from tip to tail, was inscribed with the runes of an array formation. This array formation was for conducting true essence. The Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo and the Sacred Flame Parasol Tree were originally two top quality materials that could channel thunder and fire. Now, with the addition of the array formation, not only was it smooth and unimpeded. There would be an extremely increased degree of strength as well.

It could be said that this spear was tailor made for Lin Ming.

Ancestor Chi Yan caressed the long spear as if it were his most beloved. The grade of the treasure spear was exactly what he expected, a high-grade earth-step treasure. And it was amongst the

highest of its level.

Normally, only when a heaven-step treasure was forged would it draw in heavenly tribulation. If a treasure could be tempered with heavenly tribulation, it would become much sharper and stronger.

The spear that Ancestor Chi Yan made didn't qualify to be a heaven-step treasure. But, because it contained too many top quality thunder and fire materials and it was forged near the Primal Chaos Heavens, it was still able to direct the thunder and fire origin energy of the skies, creating a false heavenly tribulation.

Although it wasn't a true heavenly tribulation, it still performed a role similar to tempering, taking the quality of this divine spear a step further.

Ancestor Chi Yan traced the spear for some time, and then he reluctantly parted from it, handing it back to Lin Ming. He said, "This spear is yours, you name it."

Lin Ming took the spear and casually shook it. The entire spear shook with a deep inner power, enough to shatter the bones of an ordinary master.

Pouring a bit of true essence in it, thunder and fire suddenly twined around the entire spear, making violent popping noises that caused one's heart to race. If this terrifying strength was used with the Thunder Annihilation, the might of that strike would be difficult to imagine.

Lin Ming said, “Since this is forged from Purple Comet Divine Metal, I will name it the Purple Comet Divine Spear!”

Now that Lin Ming had obtained such a divine spear, he anxiously wanted to test just how powerful it was. He just had a great test subject in mind.

The Southern Wilderness’ Fire Worm Shaman.

.....

Ten days later, Southern Wilderness’ 100,000 Mountain Range

The skies were clear and free, the sun shining brightly. Above the forest of the Southern Wilderness, with a sharp whistling, a flying beast with a wingspan of 60 feet was soaring through the endless skies. Its entire body was covered in scales, and it had a long body and tail just like a dragon.

Its wide wings formed a great shadow on the ground. Looking from afar, this flying beast looked like a Flood Dragon with two large wings.

This beast was called a Winged Flood Dragon, and it also had the bloodline of a Winged Rain Dragon Saint Beast. The Winged Rain Dragon was similar to a Flood Dragon, as both were dragon-type Saint Beasts. But, the Winged Rain Dragon had wings, thus its descendants could fly as well.

There was a youth standing on the back of the Winged Flood Dragon, clad in black with a purple spear in his hand, facing the billow wings. The youth was Lin Ming.

Ten days ago, Lin Ming had left Ancestor Chi Yan's mountain range, and he had been gifted this Winged Flood Dragon so he could fly instead of walk. In terms of speed, the Winged Flood Dragon was far beyond what a Heavenly Wing Eagle could compare to. With a single spread of its wings, it could fly for tens of thousands of miles. It was a priceless mount.

Not only that, Ancestor Chi Yan personally used an array formation to conceal the brilliant radiance and true essence fluctuations on Lin Ming's Purple Comet Divine Spear, so that if one looked at it, they would only think it was an extremely ordinary high-grade human-step treasure. Only someone whose cultivation surpassed Ancestor Chi Yan could see through it, otherwise it would be difficult to discern anything.

The Purple Comet Divine Spear was incomparably precious after all. With Lin Ming's current strength, taking such a valuable weapon out in public was no different to suicide.

As of now there were only two people that knew that Lin Ming had the Purple Comet Divine Spear, Mu Qianyu and Ancestor Chi Yan.

Mu Qianyu was naturally trustworthy. Although Ancestor Chi Yan had a very violent and capricious personality, he still had certain codes of conduct he followed and he was a generally upright person. Also, he could be considered a good friend of Lin

Ming's, and wouldn't betray him. Much less, he was also the one that personally forged the spear.

The Winged Flood Dragon flew with lightning speed. As Lin Ming stood on the dragon's back, he could see the landscape underneath him rapidly changing, and he was unable to restrain a sigh. It had only been a few months, but now that he returned, his circumstances were completely different to what they once were.

In the past, he had been chased down and nearly killed by Huo Gong. He had risked his life to kill Huo Gong. Afterwards, he was also chased down and nearly killed by the Fire Worm Shaman. If it wasn't for the fact that he had tremendously good luck and met the Vermillion Bird that was on its way to Thundercrash Mountain, who had startled the Shaman's Flame Essence Avatar into hiding, he would have probably fallen to his doom in Blackwater Swamp. After that, he had entered Thundercrash Mountain, and he had barely escaped after risking his life.

It was like all these life and death situations were just yesterday. But now that he returned to the Southern Wilderness today, Lin Ming's strength could no longer be compared to what it once was. There was no longer anyone in the Southern Wilderness that could threaten him.

Lin Ming's first destination was Fog Valley Tribe.

Fog Valley Tribe was located in a deep mountain valley, and this valley would often fill with a noxious fog in the morning. This was where its name came from. It was a small tribe that was quite close to the Fire Worm Tribe, and it only had a population of four or five

thousand people.

As Lin Ming flew near Fog Valley Tribe, he let the Winged Flood Dragon forage for its own food in the jungles of the Southern Wilderness. The Winged Flood Dragon had a bloodline purity equal to the Thunder Lizards of Thundercrash Mountain. Its current strength was comparably to a Houtian realm master. In the jungles of the Southern Wilderness, it had no rival, thus there was no need to worry about it.

Lin Ming jumped down from the back of the Flying Flood Dragon. In the 10,000 feet of air, he was just like a fish that was rapidly swimming through water. With a single wave of his sleeve, he was able to decelerate using the Concept of Wind, becoming as light as a feather and gently falling to the ground.

Lin Ming followed the path that he remembered and soon, he found a small house located in the corner of Fog Valley. The gravelled path was filled with blue stones and the thatched roof was bright with drops of rain. It had a very refreshing feeling.

In the red tiled courtyard, there was a young, pretty girl in a thick cotton dress. She carried a wooden basin. She was wringing out the clothes in it and hanging them to dry on a rope underneath the hot morning sun. Under the sunlight, the delicate girl's tender forearm was like a lotus root, her fair skin glimmering.

This girl was a witch of the Na Tribe, Na Shui. When Lin Ming had gone to assassinate Chi Guda, he had given the sisters some gold and settled them in Fog Valley Tribe.

Before entering the Sorcerer Holy Land, Lin Ming had sworn that he would get revenge for the sisters. Lin Ming was a pure and righteous individual who didn't make promises easily, he kept those he did make. Now, he came back to fulfill that promise.

“Big Brother Mo Lin?” As Na Shui saw Lin Ming come into the courtyard, she suddenly froze. Her eyes began to water, revealing a touch of surprise, disbelief, and joy.

“Where's your older sister?” Lin Ming faintly smiled at Na Shui. Mo Lin was a pseudonym that he had once used in the Southern Wilderness.

“She's in... In...” Na Shui nodded energetically and then quickly laid down the wooden basin, running into the house as she shouted, “Big Sister! Big Brother Mo Lin is back!”

When Na Shui had first met Lin Ming, he had appeared as a savior in her eyes. Not only did he kill the two men that had kidnapped her and her big sister, after that, he had even killed the man who had murdered her parents. Afterwards, in the jungles of the Southern Wilderness, they had encountered hardships one after the other, but Lin Ming had overcome all of these. Because of this, Na Shui, who had just begun to become interested in the opposite sex, had never forgotten Lin Ming. He held a special place in her heart.

It was just a few blinks of the eye, and then, Na Yi appeared in the doorway. She wore a soiled apron, and her sleeves were pulled

up. Her slender and delicate fingers were wet from washing vegetables and they still dripped with water. She was just like a slim and graceful treasure of a family.

When Na Yi saw Lin Ming, she was surprised. She was well aware of just how terrifying and extraordinary Lin Ming's talent was, and also the difference between Lin Ming and their two sisters' statuses. She thought that she would never see Lin Ming again in her lifetime, she never expected that he would actually come back.

“Benefactor.” Na Yi bowed, respectfully greeting Lin Ming. In contrast to the normally lively and innocent Na Shui, Na Yi had a calm temperament that completely didn't suit her age. This had most likely originated from having experienced the sight of her mother's half eaten corpse, and then sealing off her heart.

Hearing Na Yi call him a benefactor, Lin Ming felt a bit helpless. This title really made him feel uncomfortable. When he killed Chi Guda, he had taken vengeance for the sisters' parents. He really could be considered a benefactor.

“Let's go into the house, there are some questions I'd like to ask you.”

As the three walked into the house, the room was a bit dark. There was a basin full of just washed vegetables, and also a steaming hot stove on the other side.

“Has there been any activity in the Fire Worm Tribe these days?” Li Ming casually glanced around, feeling the simple life that these

two sisters lived.

“There hasn’t been any.” Na Yu shook her head. Fog Valley Tribe was very close to the Fire Worm Tribe. If the Fire Worm Tribe had sent any troops to wage war against other tribes, she would naturally know.

“Since there isn’t anything happening, then all the masters of Fire Worm Tribe must be gathered in their lair. Mm... do you know where the Fire Worm Church is?”

“Where the Fire Worm Church is?” Na Yi hesitate, her voice tinged with doubt, “I know, does Benefactor...”

Lin Ming said, “When I went to the Sorcerer Pagoda, I made a promise to you that I would get vengeance for you sisters and kill Chi Guda and the Fire Worm Shaman. Now, Chi Guda is dead, and there is only the Fire Worm Shaman remaining. Not only does this person have enmity for killing your master, but I also have a deep blood feud with him. Also, I want to obtain the Fire Worm Tribe’s Sacred Flame for myself. These are the reasons that I came back to the Southern Wilderness to kill him.”

As Lin Ming spoke, Na Yi’s eyes were wide in shock. Na Shui also gasped, covering her mouth with her hands. Killing the Fire Worm Shaman? Taking the Fire Worm Tribe’s Sacred Flame for himself!?!?

The Fire Worm Shaman’s strength was at least at the middle Houtian realm. He had once easily killed their master. To the twin

sisters, such a character was a top master in the entire Southern Wilderness. He was just like an insurmountable mountain. Even Na Yi who had a normally firm temperament, would feel a sense of suffocation and dread in killing such a character to take vengeance for her master. She was aware that in her entire life, she might never achieve the strength to do so.

But now, Lin Ming actually planned to go kill the Fire Worm Shaman?

Heavens!

He was only 16 years old!

When Lin Ming had killed Chi Guda, this act gave Na Yi an overwhelming sense of horror. There were some peerless talents that were recorded down in the ancient texts of the Faith of the Sorcerer that could accomplish this at 15 or 16 years of age. After Lin Ming had returned from the Divine Kingdom and killed Chi Guda, Na Yi was shocked. But she was still able to accept this. Now, he also wanted to kill the Fire Worm Shaman... this was simply unimaginable!

Chapter 312 – Fire Worm Church Leader

“Benefactor, the Fire Worm Shaman’s cultivation is at least at the middle Houtian realm, he might even be at the late Houtian realm!” Na Yi tried to keep her calm, but her voice was still trembling. She knew how astonishing Lin Ming’s talent was, but she found it hard to imagine that Lin Ming’s strength would have progressed so much in just a few months.

Now, she didn’t have accurate information on just how strong the Fire Worm Shaman was. Much less how strong he was, the Fire Worm Shaman would undoubtedly be surrounded by countless masters. If Lin Ming wished to kill the Fire Worm Shaman in such a situation, he would have to have at least the strength of a peak Houtian master in order to dare to do such a thing.

Seeing that Lin Ming’s current cultivation was at most in the Pulse Condensation period, would his true strength actually manage to jump past almost two whole realms?

Na Yi found this unbelievable. Even if it was the Southern Wilderness’ Feather Emperor that was recorded down in the Faith of the Sorcerer’s ancient texts, his strength wouldn’t be so exaggerated at such a young age. In Na Yi’s heart, the Feather Emperor of the Southern Wilderness was only inferior to the Faith of the Sorcerer. This peerless master had once created his own empire in the Southern Wilderness that was equal to a third-grade sect. His power was difficult to estimate, unfathomable.

“Benefactor, let me search around a bit more so I can learn just how strong the Fire Worm Shaman is.”

Lin Ming said, “That doesn’t matter. Even if his strength is at the peak Houtian realm, I have enough hidden abilities to kill him, or I can even freely retreat if I wish. The reason I came today was to inform you that I will complete my promise to you, not to find out information from you.”

Na Yi was speechless. Really, if Lin Ming had come to the Southern Wilderness to kill the Fire Worm Shaman, he would have already had some sort of plan. There was no need for him to come ask her for information on how to kill the Fire Worm Shaman. In any case, the information she had was limited, and she wouldn’t be able to give any valuable advice anyways.

“I understand.” Na Yi nodded. In her mind, Lin Ming was a paradox that managed to complete incredible miracles that others couldn’t. She didn’t think that Lin Ming was crazy or hotheaded, she just found it unbelievable.

“When I go to kill the Fire Worm Shaman, whether I succeed or not, you need to take your little sister far away, as far away from the Fire Worm Tribe as you can. This place is too close, it won’t be safe.” As Lin Ming said this, he took a foot long square box out of his spatial ring, and then gave it to Na Yi, saying, “This is for you sisters. In the future, whether or not you want to live an ordinary prosperous life or try to turn your fate and rebuild your tribe, all will be decided by you.”

Lin Ming placed the box on the table. The sisters had given him a very great fortuitous opportunity. This was the kindness he returned to them to consider all of their debts fully repaid.

“Big Brother Mo Lin... you...” As Na Shui saw that Lin Ming was about to leave, she pursed her lips, her eyes trembling and shining wet. She didn’t know what to say.

Lin Ming faintly smiled, gently rubbing Na Shui’s head and said, “Cultivate well. Perhaps, in the future, we will meet again.”

As Lin Ming said this, he left the house, activated his movement technique and instantly vanished into the horizon.

Na Yi saw her little sister’s longing look as if she was reluctantly willing to part ways, and then sighed, shaking her head.

In the future, Lin Ming would most likely become an existence similar to the Feather Emperor. He would become a figure that dominated a land of several hundreds of thousands of miles. The disparity between them was simply a ravine that they couldn’t cross.

How could he still be her Big Brother Mo Lin?

As Na Yi was deep in thought, she casually opened the box that Lin Ming left behind. As she looked at the contents inside, she was stunned silly.

The box was packed full of golden banknotes, each one worth 1000 gold taels. These packs of banknotes looked solid, and looking at the thickness, there had to be at least one or two hundred. This

meant that this was a few hundred thousand gold taels. An average person could spend lavishly their entire life and never spend it all. Even if they used this to purchase cultivation materials for martial artists, they still wouldn't spend it all. It was enough for the two sisters to not have to worry about money ever again.

Near the stack of golden banknotes, there was a jade slip. And near the jade slip, there were a few bottles of pills. After opening the pill bottles, a light fragrance wafted out. These were absolutely top-grade pills!

As Na Yi held the jade slip in her hand, she let out a light breath. It was a medium-grade human-step cultivation method. In addition to these pills and golden banknotes, the worth of this box was no less than a million gold taels.

Although Na Yi had been a witch of the great Na Tribe and had been accustomed to wealth, the Southern Wilderness was poorer than the mainland. A great tribe with half a million people would find it difficult to put out so much money.

But Lin Ming had actually casually gifted this, just what degree of influence did he have?

Na Yi suddenly felt that, relative to this great world, the tribes of the south were insignificant ants...

.....

Fire Worm City was 900 miles west of Fog Valley Tribe. It was the center of command for the Fire Worm Tribe, and also the origin of the Fire Worm Church.

Most tribes of the Southern Wilderness had a theocracy that dominated the secular leader. The Fire Worm Tribe was no exception. The Fire Worm Shaman Chi Yue had a higher degree of influence than the Tribal Chief.

Within the very center of Fire Worm City, there were seven great spirals towers. These spiral towers were all above 200 feet, with the largest one in the center at over 300 feet.

The giant complex that these seven spiral towers revolved around was the Fire Worm Church.

The curtain of night slowly fell upon the land. The noisy streets of the day quieted, and the lamplights of 10,000 families in Fire Worm City shined out, shining out against the endless starry sky. This was a rare scene in the entire Southern Wilderness. These past years, the Fire Worm Tribe had constantly been at war, plundering other tribes and taking slaves. Now, the total population of the Fire Worm Tribe reached several million. Fire Worm City also became one of the largest cities in the Southern Wilderness.

Within the highest room of the central spire, there were several people sitting around a round table. The man in the seat of honor was a bald man. He was dressed in a dark black robe, and on his head was tattooed in strange patterns. His face was calm and indifferent.

Besides him was a long and thick staff. This staff was shaped like a spindle, and there was a circle of white skulls hanging from it.

This man was the Fire Worm Shaman, Chi Yue.

At Chi Yue's right hand seat, there was a fat middle-aged man. He was hugging a delicate looking maid, and his pudgy stumpy hands were delving into the clothes of a slave girl, recklessly rubbing against her. The female slave bit her lips until they hurt, her whole body trembling but not daring to speak or react.

Although these fat man's actions were disgusting and lewd and his eyes smiled in a lascivious grin, his eyes actually revealed a hint of murderous intent. "Shaman Chi Yue, the soldiers and horses are already ready, we are just waiting for some masters of the Church to join. As long as Shaman Chi Yue calculates an auspicious day, we shall push forward, and we shall flatten the Agu Tribe in a single sweep! We will plunder their cultivation resources, give them to the Church, kill their heathens, and sell off the slaves to supply the treasure. The rest of the slaves will be used to serve us."

As the fat man spoke, his smile grew wider, and the strength of his hand increased. The slave girl paled in pain, and sweat began to form on her forehead.

But, she clenched her teeth, not daring to utter a single sound. This man who was groping her was the Chief of the Fire Worm Tribe, and he had extremely cruel and brutal methods for dealing with those he disliked. He was even more vicious than Fire Worm

Church Founder. These past years, there were countless slave girls who were humiliated or killed by him. If she couldn't bear the pain and interrupted the conference of these three people, her fate would be truly pitiful. She had a sister who couldn't bear the pain and coughed, and then she was thrown into the army camp as a prostitute slave for anyone's use. Now, it was unknown whether she was dead or alive.

Chi Yue sat in the seat of honor, his right hand flipped up, his palm up, and his thumbs tapped his other four fingers. He seemed to be calculating something. A moment later, Chi Yue slowly said, "Three months later, when the Wolf Star intersects with the Sky Star, that is when you may dispatch the army."

"Three months? Does it have to be that long?" The Fat Chief frowned. He didn't want to wait, and he wasn't satisfied with this time.

With the current strength of the Fire Worm Tribe, demolishing the Agu Tribe was easy. The only problem was how many losses there would be. Chi Yue's words represented the entire Fire Worm Church. Even if the Fat Chief was the Chief, he could not argue against him.

As the Fat Chief looked at the Fire Worm Great General on his right side, he nodded and said, "Then we shall go in three months. At that time, we shall be depending on the Church of the Shamans to help us at that time."

"Of course!" Chi Yue said without a break in composure.

As the Fat Chief saw Chi Yue's expression, he was somewhat unhappy. Every time, this Fat Chief would have to beg the Fire Worm Church to send out masters. Once the cultivation resources were plundered, they were all handed over to the Fire Worm Church. If things continued like this, when would the army ever train a master that would be equal to the masters of the Fire Worm Church? Would they always be reliant on the Fire Worm Church?

Since the Fat Chief wasn't happy, he groped even more forcefully. Now, the slave girl could no longer bear the pain and uttered a groan.

"Mm!?" The Fat Chief frowned.

As the slave girl heard this sound, her entire body instantly went ice cold.

Her body began to tremble, and now she only had thought in her mind, she was finished. Her fate would be worse than death.

As slaves, they didn't even have the qualifications to commit suicide. According to the laws of the Fire Worm Tribe, the slaves that killed themselves would be used to feed vicious beasts. And, according to the spiritual beliefs of the Southern Wilderness, if the dead were eaten by vicious beasts or humans, they would not be able to enter into the cycle of samsara, and they would never be reincarnated.

Therefore, while many slaves wished that they could die, none of

them dared to kill themselves.

The Fat Chief's face darkened as he smiled. He was thinking on how he would punish this slave girl tonight to vent his heart's depression. But, at this moment, an icy voice fell from the sky, covering the entire spiral tower.

"I apologize! I'm afraid that you will not have the opportunity to wait another three months!"

This voice was full of a chilling murderous intent, enough that anyone who heard it would feel their heart race in fear from the hostile aura. The Fat Chief was immediately shocked. He stood up, frightened, and look above his head. He only saw the dark ceiling.

"Who is it!?"

The Fat Chief shoved the slave girl in his hands away, looking startled and alarmed. But, thinking that the Fire Worm Shaman was right near him along with many other masters, he felt a bit more at ease. These fellows would eat people and not spit out their bones, they were truly strong. Otherwise, there was no way that the Fire Worm Tribe would have been able to sweep across the northern Southern Boundary as they had these past years.

Chi Yue's complexion also changed. This person was actually able to hide from his senses, and even sneak into his tightly defended Fire Worm Tower.

“Who is it? Come out and show yourself! Don’t hide in the shadows!” Chi Yue kept his calm, and he had the ability and capital to remain calm. His cultivation had already reached the late Houtian realm, and with the help of the Eternal Flame Flame Essence, it would be hard for any other martial artist in the Houtian realm to rival him.

Within the entire Southern Wilderness, he wouldn’t say that he was the strongest, but his strength definitely ranked in the top five. Especially since he was in his own domain, he had help from many of his men. There was just no need to be afraid of anyone or anything.

Chapter 313 – Exterminating Chi Yue

On the highest floor of the spiral tower, the candle flames flickered in the night wind, and the shadows of those within disappeared, becoming small and miniscule.

Shaman Leader Chi Yue had an indifferent expression, his hand slowly tracing the side of his staff. His staff jittered, and the skulls hanging from the top began to rattle against each other.

The newly assigned Fire Worm Great General took out the heavy sword from his back, his face calm. He was a man who had struggled and killed his way up the ranks of the army on his own merits and strength, a truly vicious military man. He had been through countless slaughters and battlefields, and had also experienced the bitter taste of attempted assassinations multiple times. Now, facing this unexpected visitor, it was impossible for his heart to feel even the slightest arousal of fear.

The night wind howled, and a black shadow appeared like a desolate ghost on the ledge of the stone window. He held a purple spear in his hand, his eyes cold, and his body overflowing with murderous intent.

“Mm? Early Pulse Condensation period?” The Fire Worm Great General smirked. An early Pulse Condensation boy actually dared to come to their Fire Worm Clan’s Holy Land? This boy didn’t know how to spell the word ‘death’!

“Haha, I was wondering just who it could be, but it turns out it’s

merely a foolish idiot. An early Pulse Condensation boy actually dares to come here just to kill himself!” The Fat Chief wickedly grinned, his eyes looking behind Lin Ming. “If you have help, then call them out! Don’t go skulking in the shadows like some rat. I’ll send you both off together!”

As the Fat Chief spoke, a small fire ignited in his palm; this was a sound transmitting talisman. He was using this sound transmitting talisman to pass on a warning. The Fat Chief didn’t think that Lin Ming was really an idiot. If Lin Ming dared to intrude here, that meant there was most likely a master waiting outside for an opportunity to strike.

Although there was only a small danger, the Fat Chief was unwilling to risk his own life.

In the Grand Hall, the Fire Worm Shaman was silent. He froze for a moment as he saw Lin Ming, then instantly recalled just where he had seen him. Several months ago, this youth had killed Chi Guda. Afterwards, the Fire Worm Shaman had sent his own Flame Essence Avatar to chase down Lin Ming through Blackwater Swamp. If his Avatar hadn’t encountered the Vermillion Bird and feared being eaten, then it would have killed Lin Ming long ago.

This youth’s body held countless secrets!

He remembered that when Lin Ming just had a mere peak Bone Forging cultivation, he was already able to fly, and his strength was a level above everyone else. The Fire Worm Shaman was able to determine that Lin Ming had a unfathomable wealthy background and he also had a rare treasure that enabled him to fly.

Such a treasure was absolutely priceless. If he could obtain it, then his own power would leap ahead.

Chi Yue flicked his fingers and a wisp of flame ran out from his hands, roaring forth and jumping out the window, making a circle around the spiral tower before it flew back into Chi Yue's hand.

Then Chi Yue laughed, revealing a vicious grin. His curved lips revealed sharp teeth that were just like a vampire bat, incomparably fierce.

“So it's really just you... a few months have passed and you broke through from the peak Bone Forging stage to the early Pulse Condensation period. But after the mere advancement of a small realm, you actually think you can kill me within the lair of the Fire Worm Clan? You really think you are the Feather Emperor of the Southern Wilderness reborn!? Hehe, you don't know what it means to die!”

Chi Yue stretched out his long crimson tongue, licking his lips. To him, Lin Ming was merely a bag of treasures waiting to be opened. Such a young and ignorant young boy like Lin Ming wouldn't know what true power was. Lin Ming probably assumed that he was some normal Houtian martial artist.

When Lin Ming had killed Chi Guda, his cultivation had been at the peak of Bone Forging. Chi Guda was a half-step into the Houtian realm. Lin Ming hadn't been able to easily kill him; he had to use many hidden cards, including the Heretical God Force and even Thunderfire Annihilation.

At that point, Lin Ming's strength was able to compare to the weakest of all Houtian realm martial artists.

Now, in just three and a half months, Lin Ming's cultivation had only risen by a small degree. Chi Yue simply didn't even think that Lin Ming had any ability to threaten him. Even if he were the god-like Feather Emperor that was worshipped in the Southern Wilderness, he still wouldn't have this ability in the Pulse Condensation period!

Suddenly, the door to the meeting room burst open, and a group of heavily armed guards rushed in. The Fat Chief took this opportunity to scurry behind the bodyguards. These were his deathsworn, special guards that the Fat Chief had handpicked from the army, each and every one willing to die for him. They had fought in many battles, killing countless civilians and masters.

With these deathsworn with him – and also countless other masters in the spiral tower – the Fat Chief was much more calm. Although he was a cruel and ruthless individual, he was actually very afraid of death. To him, his life was worth more than gold. He ruled a large swathe of land, he had many women to play with; there was endless wealth of power waiting for him.

“You all protect me! Shaman Chi Yue will deal with this intruder!” The Fat Chief issued out orders via a true essence sound transmission. He could also be considered half a martial artist, but the reason he cultivated was mainly for physical fitness and to violate women.

“I do not care who you are, but since you have come, do not think that you will walk away!” The Fire Worm Great General gave a loud shout, rushing towards Lin Ming, the heavy sword in his hand cutting down!

Lin Ming calmly held the Purple Comet Spear in his hands. He watched, motionless as the Fire Worm Great General rushed towards him, slicing the heavy sword at him. But then, a chilling light suddenly flashed in Lin Ming’s eyes, and he icily spit out a single word.

“Die!”

It was as if this cold voice was the grim whispers of a death god that emanated from an endless, silent abyss. As soon as the Fire Worm Great General heard this voice, his body instantly shook, and both of his eyes lost focus.

Plop!

It was as if the Great General had his soul sucked out of him. His massive body fell to its knees, and then he keeled over. It was unknown whether or not he was still alive.

“Mm!?” The Fire Worm Shaman’s complexion changed.

Soul attack?

A soul attack wasn’t too surprising, but Lin Ming only had a

cultivation at the early Pulse Condensation period. Yet, he was able to use this soul attack to kill a peak Pulse Condensation master in a split-second. How was this possible?

The Fat Chief suddenly panicked. He didn't know that Lin Ming had used a soul attack; he only knew that with a single word, he had managed to directly kill a peak Pulse Condensation Great General. Was this boy a reincarnated demon?

Even those deathsworn near him who had been numbed to the horrors of death and destruction were agitated, unconsciously clenching their fists. They didn't fear death, but even if they didn't fear death, they were people of the Southern Wilderness who had deeply ingrained beliefs. What they feared were the demons, and the current Lin Ming seemed like a demon that they heard from folk tales.

“So... it seems that you have mastered a soul attack secret skill. It's no wonder that you dare to kill me. However, such a secret skill is useless against me!” Chi Yue's expression finally became grim.

At this time, Chi Yue was only slightly serious. As a martial artist with a late Houtian realm cultivation and also the master of a Flame Essence, the strength of a peak Pulse Condensation Great General was nothing in his eyes. Killing him in a split-second simply didn't mean anything.

His right hand flashed, and a mass of crimson flames jumped forth from his palm, “I'll turn you to ashes!”

Chi!

A bright red light shot towards Lin Ming, but Lin Ming didn't evade or dodge. Instead, his entire body was covered with a shimmering azure light, and he lifted his right hand, grabbing out at the red light.

Peng!

The bright red light exploded like a firework in Lin Ming's palm. But Lin Ming's right hand only glimmered with the faintest golden light; not even a single inch of his body had been burned.

“What!?”

The Fire Worm Shaman who had been trying to maintain a calm and collected appearance finally lost his composure. Although he hadn't used the Fire Essence to attack, he had still used 60 to 70% of his strength. And yet, his attack was actually blocked by the enemy, and bare-handed? This... this was impossible!

At this time, the Fire Worm Shaman already imagined that Lin Ming might be a Xiantian master in disguise. But if he was a Xiantian master, then why would he mask himself under the illusion of an early Pulse Condensation youth, and come here to trick him?

He no longer had time to wonder; at this moment, Lin Ming had

already lifted his spear!

A spear thrust out, thunder howled, true essence cut the air. The meeting table was shattered into pieces, and the tip of that purple spear pierced towards Chi Yue's chest!

At this critical moment, Chi Yue fiercely bit down on his tongue, and a young boy wreathed in flames flew from his chest, straight towards Lin Ming's spear!

“You finally came out?”

Lin Ming wildly grinned, and true essence erupted from his body like a volcano!

Heretical God Force – open!

The Heretical God Seed howled, and the power of thunder and fire surged through the shaft of the Purple Comet Spear, its power multiplying!

The speartip pointed towards the young flame boy's forehead, between his eyes, azure true essence whistling. This young flame boy was the Fire Worm Shaman's Flame Essence Avatar. And this one strike was to destroy that flame boy's soul mark!

“Ahh!!!”

The flame boy wailed like a demented beast, its young face twisting in horror. Its two little hands tightly grabbed onto the tip of the Purple Comet Spear!

Chi chi chi!

The Purple Comet Spear was forged from divine materials of heaven and earth. As the flame boy held onto this spear, its two small hands began to smoke. But no matter how painful it was or how its face contorted in agony, it still did not let go of this spear!

“Go die!”

Behind the flame boy, Chi Yue flourished his staff, true essence erupting from his body. He smashed down at Lin Ming with all of his strength!

Lin Ming sneered, and the Purple Comet Spear turned. A steel needle engraved with a Purple Flood Dragon burst out from his fingertip.

Bang!

Chi Yue's staff pounded the ground. Rocks exploded, and the entire spiral tower trembled. However, Lin Ming's figure had already disappeared like smoke.

Meanwhile, the coiling dragon steel needle had already pierced between the flame boy's eyes!

Pah!

With a barely audible sound, the coiling dragon needle shot through the flame boy's head, exiting from the other side. The flame boy's face froze for a moment and then immediately issued forth an inhuman wail, his once innocent and cute face already completely twisted into a monster.

“Ahhhhhhhh!!!!”

Chi Yue's hair scattered, his eyes bloodshot, completely red. Blue veins stuck out on his forehead like large earthworms, covering his entirely bald head. “You! You actually destroyed my Avatar!”

“Not only did I destroy your Avatar, but I will also kill you!”

Lin Ming was the judge, jury, and executioner of Chi Yue's fate. His spear flipped over, and thrust straight towards Chi Yue's throat. With the Concept of Wind fused into the spear, its speed drew near the extreme. Chi Yue could not dodge this!

“Then let's die together!”

Chi Yue's ugly face distorted, and he snapped off the top of his staff, revealing a shining knife!

At this time, crazy Chi Yue had fallen into despair. He completely

ignored Lin Ming's attack, grabbing onto to his spear and using the long knife end to stab towards Lin Ming's heart. He wanted them both to perish together!

Pah!

The Purple Comet Spear instantly pierced through Chi Yue's throat, and Chi Yue's hand suddenly stilled. Both of his eyes lost focus, and the knife in his hand seemed incomparably distant from Lin Ming...

At this time, Chi Yue had already found that Lin Ming had drawn far away. He held a long crimson chain in his hand, and this chain was directly connected to the end of the purple spear...

Chapter 314 – Night of Flowing Blood

Under the spiral tower, horrified screams sounded out one after another. Every scream was extremely short; it was clear that those who died were instantly killed. This was a completely one-sided massacre.

Slowly, the women in the spiral tower became numb to this.

The former rulers of the of Fire Worm Tribe were now nothing more than a messy pile of corpses. A moment later, a cell was opened, and a group of prisoners escaped. Their shackles were shattered, granting them the freedom they dreamed of for a long time. Slaves knelt to their feet, kissing the ground. The slave girls that had been tormented within the barracks cried upon each others' shoulders in joy.

The confusion began to spread. Overnight, the three leaders of the Fire Worm Tribe had been killed, and all of the powerful characters of the Fire Worm Clan were slain. The slaves and prisoners rose up from their chains in a mass revolt, killing their way to the palace!

In this chaos, Lin Ming was like a ghost as he flew from Fire Worm City, arriving at the residence of the Na Sisters at Fog Valley Tribe. His entire body was bathed red in blood and filled with a murderous aura; he was like a monster that had crawled from the depths of the Ashura Hell.

Fog Valley Tribe hadn't yet obtained the news of what had

happened, and they were as tranquil as ever. Na Shui was sleeping in her room. Na Yi quickly put on a thin white robe, hurrying out.

Peng!

Lin Ming tossed a bloodstained package on the ground.

As Na Yu saw this crimson colored package, her pupils narrowed. She suddenly realized what it was, and her lips shivered.

“This is Chi Yue’s head. Take it as a grave blessing for your master. The Fire Worm Tribe is in chaos, and the slaves have revolted against the palace. Maybe, from now on, there will be no more Fire Worm. The flames of war will spread to Fog Valley Tribe. You and your sister should leave...”

As Lin Ming calmly spoke, he was somewhat depressed. When the Magic Cube had opened the second time, it was because it had absorbed the blood essence of a peak Houtian master.

After Lin Ming killed Chi Yue, he had wanted to use a Houtian master’s blood essence to see if the Magic Cube would absorb Chi Yue’s blood essence and open up again. However, he was disappointed.

The Magic Cube had absorbed a bit of Chi Yue’s blood essence, but there was no reaction.

Was it because the blood essence from the Purple Gold flexible

armor that the Crown Prince had gifted him was special?

Or was it because a Houtian master's blood essence had no special meaning for the Magic Cube?

Lin Ming had a faint premonition that it was because of that reason. In his own judgement, the flexible armor that the Crown Prince had given him wasn't special in any other way.

"Chi... Chi Yue's head?" Na Yi gasped. She hadn't thought that not only would Lin Ming keep his word and kill the Fire Worm Shaman, but he would return so quickly.

Na Yi's trembling hands slowly untied the package, and she saw that the gruesome head of the fire Worm Shaman was within. She appeared excited, but also pained. She remembered the day that her own master had died a horrific death, and now, that great hatred was finally avenged. She had completed the blood oath that she taken on that day, and could now offer the Fire Worm Shaman's head as a sacrifice to her master.

"Thank you... thank you Benefactor!" Na Yi said as she bit her lips, her eyes wet with tears.

"There is no need to thank me, he was a man that I needed to kill. Now, things have been settled. Lady Na Yi, take care. If destiny wills it, we will meet again." Lin Ming's figure flashed, and he left like a ghost...

.....

Lin Ming's expectations were on the mark. After the core leaders and inner circle were all slaughtered by him, the remnants of the palace could not resist the uprising of the mob of slaves. The Fire Worm Palace was taken that evening, and in a single night, the Fire Worm Tribe was completely destroyed!

Under tyranny, there would be a revolt. Behind vast slave empires, there were often many contentious and contradictory forces working behind the scenes. If a single fuse was lit, it would explode just like a volcano.

Since ancient times, the Southern Wilderness was a land of endless chaos. There were many slave empires that existed in these years. They rose with astonishing speed, annexing large swathes of land. However, as soon as they stood straight, they would fall. This was the flow of history.

The Fire Worm Tribe was not the first, nor would they be the least.

Afterwards, war would burn down the entire country, and many powers would emerge, just like mushrooms that were struggling to grow. There were even some small tribes with just a few hundred people.

Lin Ming wouldn't have imagined that in this chaos, Na Yi would actually rely on the gold that Lin Ming had given her and also the head of Chi Yue to proclaim herself as a Sorcerer Envoy. She would

establish vast influence and power, and several years later, she would form a massive tribe with tens of thousands of people.

Na Yi slowly realized the dying wishes of her master and parents, one at a time. Not only was her vengeance fulfilled, but she also reformed the Na Tribe. Afterwards, she and her sister would rely on the resources gathered by her people to step into the Houtian realm together. Of the two sisters, one was cold-blooded, and the other was incomparably warm and gentle, becoming the twin queens that were revered within the Na Tribe.

But in that tribe, there was also a new spiritual belief that would be established, with a new figure as its head. This figure held a long spear in his hand and looked like a youth dressed in black. He was called the Spear Emperor. It was said that the Spear Emperor was an existence even more formidable than the Feather Emperor from 6000 years ago. But after he rose to fame, he returned to his homeland, no one knowing where he went.

It was not only in the new Na Tribe, but also in every major tribe's ancient texts. They all recorded that a legendary figure known as the Spear Emperor had completely slaughtered all of the Fire Worm Tribe's masters. Yet this youth was only between 16 and 18 years of age. Such an incredible matter had countless eyewitnesses, including a group of former slave girls that solemnly testified they had seen Lin Ming, and even referred to him as the Sorcerer Envoy. This young boy had instantly killed the Fire Worm Shaman, this is what the people believed.

The people of the Southern Wilderness worshipped powerful figures the most. To them, these powerhouses were gods.

Therefore there were several tribes that had formed from the wreckage of the Fire Worm Tribe and took the Spear Emperor into their spiritual beliefs.

Finally, the Spear Emperor was recorded down within the ancient texts with a status equal to the Feather Emperor within the Southern Wilderness.

Of course, all of this is a story for another time.

.....

After the downfall of the Fire Worm Clan, Lin Ming hid within a remote cave in the Southern Wilderness, going into seclusion as he prepared to swallow the Earthcore Crimson Flame.

He first used the Dreamland Pearl to lay down an enchantment, so that no vicious beasts would disturb him.

Then he took the Fire Essence from his spatial ring and slowly removed the seals, layer by layer. The Flame Essence suddenly moved, as if he wanted to break free.

Although a Flame Essence was eternal and would never be extinguished, its strength would still slowly fade. If a Flame Essence was sealed for too long a time, it would become extremely weak.

After the battle with Chi Yue, not only did Lin Ming obtain the

Flame Essence, but he also understood a rough limit of his strength.

Chi Yue had a cultivation at the late Houtian realm. Because he had a Flame Essence, his strength was comparable to a lowly peak Houtian realm master. Within Chi Yue's so-called Houtian realm, it would be difficult for anyone to rival him. However, this was only within the Southern Wilderness.

There was a vast difference in strength between a common martial artist and a sect's martial artist. This was because the resources they had were different, but also because their cultivation methods and martial skills had a wide disparity between them. Not just that, but there was also the difference in talent. With all of these factors combined together, it was difficult to place them side by side.

If one casually selected someone from a group that contained talents like Jiang Lanjian or Ouyang Ming, they could compare with a middle Houtian realm master. If it was an earth-step talent like Jiang Baoyun, Bai Shuxuan, or Mugu Buyu, they could compare with a late Houtian realm master.

But with Lin Ming's current strength – in addition to the support of the Purple Comet Spear and the coiling dragon steel needle – he could defeat a peak Houtian master with ease.

But this so-called peak Houtian master was much weaker than a true sect's Houtian master like Qin Ziya.

Lin Ming pondered. If he confronted Qin Ziya as he was now, he would definitely be defeated.

But if he also had this Flame Essence...

Lin Ming's gaze shifted to the Earthcore Crimson Flame. He didn't know just how much his strength would grow after he swallowed it.

"Even with this Flame Essence, I fear it would be impossible for me to defeat Qin Ziya. I'm just too weak as I am. Compared to the Xiantian realm Ouyang Boyan, I'm simply nothing."

Thinking of Ouyang Boyan, Lin Ming felt uneasy, like a thorn was stabbed in his back. With such a powerful enemy lurking behind him, he would naturally not be comfortable.

Ouyang Boyan would never dare to kill him outright. On the other hand, it was impossible for Lin Ming to depend on Mu Qianyu's influence to kill Ouyang Boyan. The sect rules of the Seven Profound Valleys not only protected Lin Ming, but they also protected Ouyang Boyan. No matter how high Mu Qianyu's status was, it was impossible for her to kill Ouyang Boyan for wrongdoing without even a shred of evidence. That might possibly cause the disintegration of their alliance.

"Power..." Lin Ming clenched his teeth.

What he needed the most right now was power. As long as he was

by himself and revealed his location, there was an extreme possibility that he would be chased down by Ouyang Boyan. Then, there was an absolute chance he would die with no grave!

Lin Ming didn't think that as he was now, there would even be a half chance of him escaping from Ouyang Boyan's grasp.

Not only that, but his parents were forced to hide because of the threat of Ouyang Boyan. Because of the guilt of having to make his parents live life without being able to go out, Lin Ming yearned for power even more.

“Tempering Marrow is just too difficult. I have to temporarily set aside the Tempering Marrow boundary for now and try to break through to the Houtian realm!” Lin Ming decided that as long as he could complete Tempering Marrow before he was 20 years old, it wouldn't be considered too late.

After 20 years of age, the best time for Tempering Marrow would pass. His marrow would age, and it would become increasingly difficult to succeed.

Lin Ming tore off the final seals of the Earthcore Crimson Flame and pressed the Flame Essence directly into his own chest.

The burning hot power of fire immediately rushed into Lin Ming's meridians, recklessly destroying everything in sight.

Lin Ming gave a stuffy cough and his body trembled; his

complexion was as red as blood.

With his strength, in combination with the Heretical God Seed, he had the power to suppress the power of fire and absorb the medium-grade human-step Flame Essence. In truth, this wasn't too difficult; it was just that the Fire Worm Tribe had cultivated their Flame Essence very well.

It was just like taming a tiger. There was naturally an enormous difference between taming an adult tiger and taming a tiger cub.

There were many fire attribute martial artists, that in order to absorb a Flame Essence, would first have to wear down the fiery energy of the Flame Essence before barely being able to absorb it. When Lin Ming had jumped realms and absorbed the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder, he had used the Magnetic Birthstone to channel and absorb the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder's power of thunder before he could absorb it.

But this time, Lin Ming didn't have a precious fire attribute version of the Magnetic Birthstone that was able to absorb the power of fire from the Flame Essence. Although wearing down the Flame Essence would be relatively easy, having to build it back up again was very troublesome.

Lin Ming didn't want to waste this time.

Lin Ming suppressed the bursts of burning pain within him, and then revolved his azure true essence, constantly pouring it into the Heretical God Seed. A wave of suppression surged forth, potently

pushing down the Earthcore Crimson Flame.

The Heretical God Seed had an extremely powerful suppressive strength against fire and thunder. The Earthcore Crimson Flame was divided into parts, scattering within Lin Ming's meridians...

Facing so many flames, Lin Ming meditated in patience, and began to slowly absorb them all...

Chapter 315 – Sect Destruction

A Flame Essence was an amazingly powerful natural force. In normal circumstances, when it was a highly potent medium-grade human-step Flame Essence, one would have to be a late Houtian master from a sect, or a peak Houtian master to absorb it. Not only that, but one would usually need the assistance of some rare treasure like the Glacial Ice Divine Spring.

But Lin Ming was currently relying entirely on his own powerful body and strength to forcibly tame this Flame Essence. His advantage was that his meridians were incomparably tough, but the burning pain still felt like he was being roasted from the inside out, spreading through his body like a tide. Lin Ming revolved his azure true essence to protect his meridians. The azure true essence was endless; even after being burned away by the flames, it would quickly regenerate.

With such support, Lin Ming began to stamp out the flames that rampaged through his meridians. Each time, the Flame Essence would weaken, but the Heretical God Seed would grow stronger.

Under this reversal, another quarter hour passed and Lin Ming was finally able to take complete control of the situation. Now, absorbing the Earthcore Crimson Flame was only a matter of time.

Chi chi chi!

The Heretical God Seed's Flame Essence danced excitedly, greedily devouring all of the power of fire and constantly growing.

To a normal martial artist, a Flame Essence was no different from a weapon. Once a weapon was forged, its grade was already decided. Later, when they became stronger, they would have to replace their weapon just like they replaced a Flame Essence.

But this situation would never occur with the Heretical God Seed. The Flame Essence could absorb other Flame Essences and grow from them.

An hour later, Lin Ming used his soul force to tow a tiny amount of crimson flame through his meridians. These were the final dredges of the power of fire in his meridians, and they had fully integrated within him. With the enhancement of his fusion compatibility, the Earthcore Crimson Flame became increasingly lively.

“The absorption has finally ended.”

Lin Ming let out a light breath, and absorbed all of the leftover flames into the Heretical God Seed. Then a vast power of fire erupted from within, integrating with the fire origin energy he had gathered while cultivating the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’.

There was a slight popping sound, as if something had cracked apart, and Lin Ming was surprised. Then, he was ecstatic. He had finally broken through to the middle Pulse Condensation period!

He had finally made his breakthrough. With the little bit of

medicinal strength left over from the Heaven Opening Pill, the absorption of the Flame Essence, and also the month-long high-intensity cultivation within Ancestor Chi Yan's mountain range, these three factors had come together and enabled him to complete his breakthrough. It had been a long and difficult process.

If he were a normal martial artist, things wouldn't have been so troublesome. After taking a Heaven Opening Pill, as long as his body didn't explode from the energy, then he would be able to rush to the late Pulse Condensation period or even the peak Pulse Condensation period in a single go.

This was the price Lin Ming had to pay in order to lay down the most solid of foundations. Every time he made a breakthrough, he would have to pay two times, or even three times the cost of a normal martial artist.

It wasn't only Lin Ming, but also sect geniuses like Jiang Baoyun, Bai Shuxuan, Qin Wuxin, and others. Before they reached the Xiantian realm, they would have to make a perfect breakthrough at every stage. This was also why they were superior talents that could fight above their ranks, and the reason they were leagues above any common martial artist.

If there was ever a day that their talent was insufficient to carry them to a complete breakthrough, then that would be the signal that they had reached the end of their cultivation road. In the future, it would be exceedingly difficult to reach a higher realm.

After breaking through to the middle Pulse Condensation period, Lin Ming needed to remove all the impurities in his body that he

had recently acquired. He readied himself to return to the Seven Profound Valleys so he could calmly cultivate. While he was there, he would also learn the Mirage Faction's camouflage techniques and explore the mystery of Jiang Baoyun's spiritual attack.

The Southern Wilderness was quite close to Lin Ming's hometown. But, he could not visit his hometown on the way back. He was alone, and now with Ouyang Boyan prowling at the edges, he didn't want to be exposed to the public. Doing so would only invite danger towards his family.

If Lin Ming didn't kill Ouyang Boyan, his heart would never be at peace.

Lin Ming sighed, and then whistled loudly into the air. The Winged Flood Dragon was called down, and Lin Ming jumped onto its back, flying straight in the direction of the Seven Profound Valleys...

However, sometimes matters never proceeded as one planned; everything was up to the whim of fate. Lin Ming never thought that while he was returning to the sect, there would be a shocking event that would affect Divine Phoenix Island and the 19 third-grade sects, and also an event that would change the climate of the entire South Horizon Region...

.....

Two days later –

Lin Ming sat on the Winged Flood Dragon's back, flying at full speed towards the Seven Profound Valleys. A strong heavenly wind blew against him, his clothes flapping in the wind, and his black hair wildly dancing in the air.

At this moment, a bright flame suddenly lit in front of Lin Ming. The flame flashed, and was quickly flown past by the Winged Flood Dragon.

Sound transmitting talisman?

Lin Ming was stunned. He was still in the remote lands of the Seven Profound territory. The only one that could use, or would be willing to use a sound transmitting talisman at this time to find him would be Mu Qianyu. Such a super long-distance sound transmitting talisman had an astronomical price; even Mu Qianyu wouldn't casually use one.

What sort of important matter had happened? She actually used a super long-distance sound transmitting talisman to contact him?

After several breaths, the fuzzy and intermittent voice of Mu Qianyu resounded in Lin Ming's ear.

“In a single night, the Moon Seizing Sect was destroyed. Over 90% of their sect has perished. The entire region has broken out with vicious beast tides. This is absolutely the work of the South Sea Demon Region's Beast Control Clan Sovereign. Remember to be careful.”

Mm!?

Lin Ming was stunned. The Moon Seizing Sect was destroyed in a single night!? How did this happen!

The Moon Seizing Sect was one of the 19 third-grade sects under the jurisdiction of Divine Phoenix Island. In terms of strength, they couldn't compare to the Seven Profound Valleys, but they ultimately were still a third-grade sect, and probably had no less than a hundred Xiantian masters, and most likely even a Revolving Core elder who commanded them. But they had actually been destroyed in a single night!

The South Sea Demon Region was actually the first to make a move!

After Lin Ming overcame his shock, he realized what the intention of the South Sea Demon Region was. It was to destroy the alliance between Divine Phoenix Island and the 19 third-grade sects.

The Moon Seizing Sect was closest to the South Sea Demon Region. As long as five or six Revolving Core masters crossed the sea and snuck into the Moon Seizing Sect, they would be destroyed overnight!

The South Sea Demon Region was temporarily unable to move against Divine Phoenix Island. But, if they wanted to act against these third-grade sects, who could stop the combined power of five to six Revolving Core masters?

If the South Sea Demon Region could exterminate the Moon Seizing Sect, then that meant they could similarly exterminate the Seven Profound Valleys!

Maybe only a top third-grade sect like the Falling Cloud Sect or Peacock Mountain would be able to barely defend themselves. Like this, the alliance of Divine Phoenix Island and the 19 third-grade sects would be in imminent danger. If Divine Phoenix Island couldn't protect the other third-grade sects, then who wouldn't be afraid after having the tragic extermination of a fellow third-grade sect placed in front of them?

If Divine Phoenix Island was defeated by the South Sea Demon Region, then the South Sea Demon Region would be the absolute rulers of the entire Divine Phoenix territory. The third-grade sects might be able to maintain a pitiful existence in that situation. But, if they joined hands with Divine Phoenix Island and resisted them, they might not be able to see the next dawn.

Thinking this, Lin Ming couldn't help but be frightened. The South Sea Demon Region was truly a demonic clan, their actions and conduct were decisively ruthless and brutal. Without any delay – or even having sent a warning – they had directly eliminated an entire sect!

Not only was a sect exterminated, but the Beast Control Clan had also acted, stirring up a massive vicious beast tide. There were countless stories of the terrors and dangers of these vicious beast tides found within the ancient historical texts. For all these tens of thousands of years, there had been countless countries within Sky

Spill Continent that had been destroyed by a vicious beast tide. In fact, the reason that the Na Tribe of the Southern Wilderness had been destroyed by the Fire Worm Tribe was because they had been weakened by a vicious beast tide.

Beast tide... Lin Ming’s heart suddenly shook.

This was bad!

His Lin Family was located in Green Mulberry City. South of Green Mulberry City were the Green Mulberry Mountains. And the mountains continued thousands of miles south, reaching into the Southern Wilderness!

The surrounding area of the Green Mulberry Mountains was nothing worth speaking of, but if one went deep in, there were exceedingly formidable vicious beasts. Once a vicious beast tide erupted, then the city that lay at the foot of the mountains would bear the brunt of their rampage.

This was Green Mulberry City!

Thinking this, Lin Ming sucked in a breath of cold air. He had to return home immediately. Green Mulberry City was his hometown, and was no different than his very roots. He could not see his hometown destroyed.

.....

As the year ended, and the new year began, the weather started to become warmer with each day, and the fields of snow and ice melted into the ground. The lush world began to regenerate. The trees were thick with vibrant green leaves, and all sorts of little animals began to happily prance through the forests.

This deep valley was like a magical paradise. But, what very few knew was that within this deep valley, there was a relay station that was set up by the Seven Profound Valleys. In truth, this so-called relay station was actually the central transit point of a transmission array. With the background of the Seven Profound Valleys, it was difficult for them to create many long-distance transmission arrays that could span several hundred thousands of miles. So they had to set up transmit points along the way.

These relay stations had masters guarding them all year round. Currently, the deacon stationed there was Liu Yueshan, a master whose cultivation had reached the late Houtian realm.

Beyond the relay station, the land was full of flowers and sun, just like a perfect spring day. But within the relay station, there was an extremely heavy aura. Liu Yueshan frowned. At this moment, his head was lowered, as if he were thinking of something.

Suddenly, a clear roar sounded out from the sky. Liu Yueshan looked up to see the shadow of a winged dragon-shaped creature pass above him, steadily and swiftly soaring down from the sky, shooting past between two mountains and disappearing.

Liu Yueshan didn't even have time to determine just what had

happened, when he saw a black figure jump down from the sky, slowly falling onto the ground.

This just-arrived black-clothed youth seemed to be around 17 or 18 years old, and the sharp contours of his face seemed to hide a sharp energy that made one's heart race.

Liu Yueshan's pupils shrank. This person was...

"Liu Yueshan?" Lin Ming shook a little token in his hand. This pure gold token was a Seven Profound Seal that only direct disciples of the Seven Profound Valleys had.

Liu Yueshan was shocked, direct disciple!?

As a deacon of a relay station, his status was inferior to Huoluo Nation's Seven Profound Martial House Master. As for those lofty characters like the direct disciples that had a status comparable to an elder, that was truly a remote existence.

"Huoluo Nation relay station deacon Liu Yueshan greets Sir."

At this time, Lin Ming was near desperation; it was like his heart was on fire. So he spared the needlessly complicated rituals and directly asked, "Liu Yueshan, I ask you, has a vicious beast tide erupted within Sky Fortune Kingdom?"

Liu Yueshan was the one who managed this relay station, and this relay station was also used to share news. Also, this place

wasn't too far from Sky Fortune Kingdom. It was very likely that he would be the first to receive any news.

“Reporting to Sir, this subordinate hasn't received any news. Vicious beast tides have risen up throughout the entire Seven Profound territory. Requests for help are like snowflakes in a winter storm. The Seven Profound Valleys is overwhelmed with requests at this moment.”

The Seven Profound territory was extremely large. In comparison, the Seven Profound Valleys was very small. There were between 100 and 200 Xiantian masters, and over a thousand Houtian masters. If the Pulse Condensation disciples and normal disciples were counted, then there might be just under 20,000 people in total. Where would they have the manpower to quell the problems of the 36 countries and also keep enough people to defend their sect, so that they wouldn't be destroyed overnight?

Lin Ming let out deep breath. There wasn't news from Sky Fortune Kingdom, but right now, no news was also good news. He hesitated for a moment, and then said to Liu Yueshan. “Deacon Liu, if I could trouble you to send a message to the Seven Profound Valleys' Total Faction and ask if they could send some help to Sky Fortune Kingdom. It is fine as long as they are at the Pulse Condensation period!”

Chapter 316 – Beast Tide

Liu Yueshan looked at Lin Ming nervously. If he were to do such a thing, it was likely that he would be scolded and punished. Currently, danger and mayhem had erupted within the entire Seven Profound territory. He had heard rumors that some great Demonic Sect had risen up, and wanted to take over the entire Divine Phoenix Province. Right now, he was just a tiny relay station deacon. He didn't even have the qualifications to use a long distance sound transmission array, much less request the Seven Profound Valleys to send men to help defend a small country.

“This... Sir...”

Lin Ming didn't have time to listen to Liu Yueshan's malingering complaints. He straightforwardly said, “You tell them that Lin Ming requests help.”

“Lin Ming?”

Liu Yueshan paused. So the direct disciple in front of him was Lin Ming. Although he hadn't visited the sect for a long time, the great name of Lin Ming still resounded in his mind like thunder. A common martial artist of the 36 countries had actually become champion of the 36 countries; how could he not have heard such an exaggerated matter? He probably would have even if he were deaf.

Come to think of it, wasn't Lin Ming from Sky Fortune Kingdom? No wonder he had this sort of request. According to Liu Yueshan's

information, Lin Ming had already become a heaven-step talent that Divine Phoenix Island was training. His status was naturally not equal to an ordinary sect disciple. Even if the sect couldn't afford to send help, they still wouldn't ignore Lin Ming's homeland.

Thinking this, Liu Yueshan immediately replied, "This subordinate will immediately request help."

As he spoke, Liu Yueshan turned and began to activate the long distance sound transmission array. Lin Ming saw that the sound transmission array began to mobilize, and he quickly jumped onto the Winged Flood Dragon.

Lin Ming was strong, but it was impossible for a single person to defend against an entire beast tide. He needed an army to back him up, and other masters at his side. It was pointless for the Seven Profound Valleys to keep Pulse Condensation martial artists around as protection. In front of a Revolving Core master, they weren't even ants. With Lin Ming's current status, it wouldn't be asking too much to request some defenders for Sky Fortune Kingdom.

The Winged Flood Dragon shot forth with lightning speed. As Lin Ming rode on its back, he was able to cross 2000 miles in a single hour.

"Mm? Those black spots in the air are vicious beasts?"

The Winged Flood Dragon was amazingly quick. In just a few

breaths of time, those black dots became clear. There were countless fire falcons, flying leopards, man-eating birds, and countless other bizarre and fantastical vicious beasts that Lin Ming didn't know the name of. There must have been tens of thousands in the dense cloud they were gathered in. And this was only in the air – there were probably many more on the ground.

Lin Ming gasped. As he was flying, this was the first time that he had witnessed the beast tide. Although these vicious beasts in front of him were mostly first-level, second-level, third-level, and other low ranking vicious beasts, this was a case of quantity over quality. A mass of them could eventually overwhelm and pile over a master.

It was hard to imagine what sort of supernatural power was used to stir up all of the vicious beasts in the massive several million mile wide land of the Divine Phoenix Province, causing beast tide eruptions on such a terrifyingly large scale!

This demonstration of the South Sea Demon Region's power was to force the 18 leftover third-grade sects to yield to their power. Now, the only way the 18 sects could face the South Sea Demon Region was if they gathered together all of their Revolving Core masters. But what sect would possibly do this? Who would willingly give up the land that they had ruled supreme over for so many years?

If they remained scattered, they could either surrender or die. But if they came together, the price they had to pay was too steep.

This move of the South Sea Demon Region was truly ruthless.

After the rioting vicious beasts discovered Lin Ming, they rushed over to him. Lin Ming took out the Purple Comet Spear from his spatial ring and thrust out. True essence stirred the power of fire within the Heretical God Seed, and a flaming red line slashed through the air as if it were dancing in the wind. Everywhere it went, vicious beasts would turn into charred corpses, falling from the sky like bugs.

With a single spear strike, dozens of vicious beasts would die. The surrounding vicious beasts were overwhelmed by this spear and were frightened of flying forwards. Lin Ming thrust out several times with his spear, planning on tearing his way through this mass of vicious beasts and using the speed of the Winged Flood Dragon to break through.

At this moment, Lin Ming suddenly heard a loud roar, and a large vicious beast approached. It had the body of a hawk and the head of a lion, and its wingspan was 50 feet wide. The lion hawk beast shot towards Lin Ming. This vicious beast was the leader of this flying beast tide.

“Fourth-level vicious beast?”

Lin Ming gave it a side glance, thrusting out his spear like usual.

Peng!

The lion hawk beast was slaughtered by the spear without any resistance.

Lin Ming relied on this spear strike and directly broke out of the encirclement, soaring away...

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At this time, in Sky Fortune Kingdom –

The news of the beast tide outbreak had already spread through the entire country. Every city that was near a forest or mountain was on edge, everyone fearing that they would be the ones rampaged over.

From yesterday until now, they had heard of cities in surrounding countries that had been annihilated under the flood of vicious beasts. In particular, the Eastern Sun Country who lived terrifyingly close to large swathes of forests had suffered the most; countless civilians had perished.

The beast tide had come so suddenly that the Eastern Sun Country didn't even have time to mobilize their army. Over half of the country had been swallowed up within the endless beast tide.

Compared to the Eastern Sun Country, Sky Fortune Kingdom was much more fortunate. Large tracts of their kingdom were plains which usually only had a few tigers. And they only had a handful of cities that were close to the mountains or forests.

The greatest of these were Sky Fortune City which was near the

Zhou Mountains, as well as Green Mulberry City which was near the Green Mulberry Mountains.

Regardless of whether it was the Zhou Mountains or the Green Mulberry Mountains, they stretched for thousands of miles. In the depths of mountains were countless extremely horrifying vicious beasts.

However, Sky Fortune City was in a much better situation than Green Mulberry City. This was because the Seven Profound Martial House was located at the greatest mountain within the Zhou Mountain range. The Seven Profound Martial House was a super shield to keep off any beast tide, this caused everyone behind them to feel much more at ease. Even if a beast tide were to occur, it had to get past the Seven Profound Martial House before reaching Sky Fortune City.

In addition, this was also the capital of Sky Fortune Kingdom. It had a large army guarding it, so the aristocrats within were relatively calm.

The Four Majors of Sky Fortune City's four Royal Guard Forces were usually unimportant, only playing a symbolic role. But now, they had become heroes of Sky Fortune City, with an extremely high and mighty status.

The army that guarded the frontier was already quickly rushing towards the capital. But how could the speed of an army compare with a beast tide? Until the army returned, Sky Fortune City had to rely on the four Royal Guard Forces as well as the Seven Profound Martial House to defend.

Zhang Danian was the major who commanded the western Royal Guard Force. These past days, his family household's door had nearly been worn down from knocking. There had been many nobles and aristocrats with statuses higher than his that had been abnormally polite. They gave him rich presents, requesting for the Royal Guard Force to take care of their families.

To these nobles, their properties and the lives of their family were much more important than gold.

Zhang Danian liked this feeling very much. He had commanded the western Royal Guard Forces for many years. As long as he didn't do something extremely stupid or crazy, he would remain the commander, and the western Royal Guard Forces would remain under his control. Zhang Danian was considering whether or not he should send troops to the Seven Profound Martial House and work with the masters there on the battlefield. Like this, they would be safe from danger.

But at this time, they received a shocking piece of news that left everyone stunned.

During the morning, they learned that Qin Ziya had withdrawn all of the Houtian realm martial artists from the Seven Profound Martial House, and even most of the Pulse Condensation period martial artists. Qin Ziya and his group had left on Heavenly Wind Eagles, flying towards Green Mulberry City. As for the disciples of the Seven Profound Martial House, they had been sent towards the very safe Moonlight City. Now the entire Seven Profound Martial House had been deserted.

Zhang Danian was frightened out of his wits. What was happening? Qin Ziya had abandoned the Seven Profound Martial House?

He felt like he was going crazy. Qin Ziya had actually decided to give up the entire Seven Profound Martial House! Even if most of the resources could be moved away, what about the seven major killing arrays, the Exquisite Pagoda, or the Ten Thousand Killing Array? These treasures were all worth millions of gold, or even tens of millions of gold, and yet they had been so easily abandoned?

But these questions were not what he was concerned about. The crux of the issue was, now that Qin Ziya had abandoned the Seven Profound Martial House, how would their Sky Fortune City manage? Without masters, how would the Royal Guard Forces defend the city?

It wasn't just Zhang Danian, but all of the high-level characters within Sky Fortune City felt like they were just waiting in a frying pan. Their root was Sky Fortune City, their everything was in Sky Fortune City. If it wasn't a last and final resort, no one was willing to leave their home and abandon their family foundation.

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“What!? Qin Ziya has snuck away at this life or death moment?” The emperor's younger brother smashed the cup in his hand against the ground. “Outrageous! How dare he! That Qin Ziya only

cares about escaping himself, he doesn't care about anything else! He cannot see the greater picture here! Hurry up and contact that Qin Ziya! I want to personally interrogate him!"

After Qin Ziya had left the Seven Profound Martial House, the news had quickly spread. At this time they hadn't flown too far, and a sound transmitting talisman was still able to reach him.

As Qin Ziya stood on the Heavenly Wind Eagle, he received a message from the emperor's younger brother asking why he abandoned them, ignoring the greater picture, sneaking away at such a critical time.

Qin Ziya pinched the sound transmitting talisman, he didn't even bother replying.

Ignoring the greater picture?

This so-called greater picture was nothing more than the situation of the Royal Family and the other ruling class individuals. Qin Ziya was not a general of Sky Fortune Kingdom, so he had no obligation to protect the Royal Family.

The command to give up the Seven Profound Martial House and retreat to Green Mulberry City was issued by him. The Seven Profound Martial House was located in the middle of the Zhou Mountains. Once a beast tide erupted, they would easily be sieged from all sides by vicious beasts. The Seven Profound Martial House didn't have the high walls that a city did, and if they stubbornly stayed, they would certainly suffer extremely heavy losses, and

those disciples that were too weak would die without a doubt.

So the only path they could take was to abandon the Seven Profound Martial House.

Compared to life, things like buildings and arrays were nothing at all.

Qin Ziya was not an official of Sky Fortune City, so he did not need to shield them.

Since they had to retreat, the choice of where to retreat to was up to him. Green Mulberry City was Qin Ziya's first choice. This was Lin Ming's hometown, and he owed a great favor to Lin Ming. This favor, Qin Ziya would naturally not forget.

The following morning, the sun dawned on the horizon. From the start of the beast tide eruptions until now, a total of two days and nights had passed. Green Mulberry City had entered into a state of extreme readiness, and all of the city's sergeants and commanders were incomparably nervous. Green Mulberry City was a major city, but because they were in the southern hinterlands of Sky Fortune Kingdom, they didn't have much of a garrison. There was just around 10,000 soldiers. It was impossibly difficult to depend on this army to block the vicious beast tide.

The requests for military rescue had already been sent out. But at this time, every other major city in Sky Fortune Kingdom was feeling insecure; none of them were willing to deprive themselves of manpower in order to help Green Mulberry City.

If help came, it would be from the armies of the frontier. But this was just too far, several thousand miles away. By the time the army arrived, Green Mulberry City might already be trampled flat by vicious beasts.

In this situation, there were already those who were frightened beyond their minds and decided to give up their family roots. They took their money and valuables, and fled to other regions.

While a small family could do this, it was much more difficult for a large and prominent family to abandon their foundation; their losses would simply be monumental. Not even mentioning the property, business, possessions, or farms, but the problem was the family itself. A large family could have thousands of individuals. They had the elderly, and also young children. Under the threat of a vicious beast tide, bringing thousands of weak and defenseless individuals safely to another city was easier said than done.

Chapter 317 – Returning Home

Gradually, the day began to brighten, and the morning mist was dispelled by the rising sun. On the towers above the city gates, two soldiers stood at attention. They hadn't slept, but they still looked spirited, warily watching all directions.

It had been two days since the beast tide outbreak. If the vicious beasts from the depths of the Green Mulberry Mountains had left at that time, it was highly likely that they would begin to approach the outer edges of the Green Mulberry Mountains.

The city gates had just opened, and a crowd fled through them. Men carried dry food and belongings, and women carried crying children. There were richer families who rode away on carriages, big boxes tied to them. There were even some larger and richer families who had some troops accompanying them. They had hired some martial artists, but, if they truly met a beast tide on the way, these martial artists that they had employed for protection would drop like flies.

Those that fled from the incoming calamity only made up a small portion of Green Mulberry City. Fleeing from Green Mulberry City didn't mean that it would be safe – it might even be more dangerous than staying in Green Mulberry City.

The guards of the city gate had finally reached their shift change, but as the two soldiers on lookout were about to be replaced by two others, at this moment, they saw a vague shadow in the sky, piercing through the morning fog like an arrow. It shot towards Green Mulberry City at an incredible speed.

“Vicious beasts!?”

“Warning! Warning! The beast tide has come!”

The refugees at the city gate suddenly panicked. As the soldiers on the lookout tower were about to sound the city alarm, they discovered that this so-called beast tide was only a single vicious beast. Not only that, but it seemed as if on top of the vicious beast was... a person’s figure?

They couldn’t see clearly because the speed this vicious beast was travelling at was too fast. Could this vicious beast that was as fast as a bolt of lightning actually be a mount? It clearly wasn’t a Heavenly Wind Eagle!

In the minds of the common people, those who could use a Heavenly Wind Eagle as a flying mount were already lofty figures. For instance, the City Lord General might have such a mount, but many prominent families wouldn’t.

The soldier didn’t sound the alarm. Instead, he used a sound transmitting talisman to inform Green Mulberry City’s City Lord. This matter was extremely sensitive. If he sounded the city alarm, it was very likely that the entire city would be thrown into utter chaos. This soldier wasn’t able to shoulder the consequences of this decision.

.....

At this time, Green Mulberry City's Lin Family.

Half an hour ago, Lin Ming was able to use a long-distance 1000 mile sound transmitting talisman to inquire about the family situation, and the Lin Family Head, Lin Wanshan had obtained the news that Lin Ming would return soon.

This sudden great news caused Lin Wanshan to pop up from his chair in happy excitement; Lin Ming was finally coming back!

At this critical juncture, the Lin Family needed a figure that could stabilize the situation. Although Lin Ming was strong, he wasn't strong enough to solve the problem of how to deal with the beast tide. Still, as long as he returned, that was enough to give the people hope.

It was not only the Lin Family, but several other important figures of other families had been informed that Lin Ming was returning. At this time, the several great families of Green Mulberry City had banded together in order to ride out this storm.

“Old Lin, is Lin Ming really coming back?”

As several important figures from the other prominent families gathered at the Lin Family residence, this was the first question that the Lu Family Clan's elder, Lu Wuyin had anxiously asked. If Lin Ming came back at this time, the significance of that was just too great. Although Lin Ming's own power wasn't enough to change the outcome, his status was even higher than the emperor

of Sky Fortune Kingdom. As long as he stayed within Green Mulberry City, it would be relatively easy to find support.

“Of course. I just received Lin Ming’s sound transmitting talisman; he should be arriving soon.” Lin Wanshan slowly said as he held a teacup in his hand. At this time, he wasn’t in the mood to drink a cup of tea.

“Now that Lin Ming is coming back, are there any masters with him?” The Zhuang Family Head Zhuang Fan asked, his eyes wide. This was the issue that most people were concerned about. In the hall, many other people’s ears pricked up to attention, looking towards Lin Wanshan with eager expressions.

Lin Wanshan sighed and said, “Lin Ming happened to be passing through the southern border. He was near Sky Fortune Kingdom so he was able to arrive quickly, and it’s only him...”

The Seven Profound Valleys was several hundred thousand miles away from Green Mulberry City. Even if the Seven Profound Valleys sent out a team of experts to help, it would still take at least 10 days if they traveled night and day.

As for the army, that wasn’t even worth mentioning.

“Only a single person...” Zhuang Fan sighed, reluctantly smiling. “It’s great that he came back. With one more master, there’s that much more hope.”

It wasn't wrong to be disappointed. Once the beast tide erupted, there would be armies of tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of vicious beasts. With only a single person, no matter how strong they were, how much could they affect a beast tide? Once the gates of Green Mulberry City fell, Lin Ming would be able to easily leave with his strength, but their families...

At this moment, the people suddenly heard a clarion roar in the sky.

What came?

Everyone quickly exited the room, some doubt in their hearts; what sort of beast would make such a cry?

Looking up, they saw that in the skies of the Lin Family residence, a red dragon-shaped creature was flying in circles.

“Mm? What is that?”

Zhuang Fan was amazed. This thing looked like a Flood Dragon that birthed two wings. It had a 70 foot wingspan, and from head to tail was 80 feet long. Its entire body was layered in dark red scales, as if there was a smoldering fire burning on its body.

This aura was not something a Heavenly Wind Eagle could ever compare with.

“Hu!”

The red monster closed its wings and dropped straight down. A powerful chilling energy rushed out, forcing everyone to step back.

At a closer look, this vicious beast was even more alarming. When its wings were spread out, they covered over half the garden. Its eyes were a dark glazed gold, it had teeth were sharp, and its scales glimmered with a cold light. It emitted an aura that caused everyone's hearts to race.

This was clearly a small dragon!

There were a few people present who were Pulse Condensation masters. From the aura that the vicious beast was giving out, they could clearly feel that its strength was at the late Houtian realm, or even higher!

It was impossible to imagine that some godly beast like this could be used as a mount.

Lu Wuyin felt envy in his heart. To have such a grand creature as a mount was an impossible luxury. There was no need to mention its speed or shape, but just its strength alone was at the late Houtian realm or above. Within the entire Sky Fortune Kingdom – not including the Seven Profound Martial House – there was only a hermit hidden off in some remote corner of the kingdom that had barely reached the late Houtian realm.

Even the famous Mister Muyi and State Marshal Qin Xiao were only at the middle Houtian realm! And within all the prominent

families of Green Mulberry City, there wasn't a single one that had an early Houtian master.

A black-clothed figure jumped down from the back of the dragon. This was Lin Ming.

“Lin Ming!”

“It's him!”

All of those who had seen Lin Ming's portrait immediately stood up. Although only Lin Ming had come, it was still better than nothing.

“Lin Ming greets the Family Head.”

Lin Ming bowed. He naturally recognized Lin Wanshan. The last time he had seen him was during the birthday of an important family figure.

At that time, Lin Ming had only been a cook's assistant.

“Nephew Lin, please get up! This ritual isn't one I can receive.” Lin Wanshan hurried forwards and propped up Lin Ming's curved body, his eyes full of satisfaction and gratification.

“Good! Good!” Lin Wanshan rubbed his hands over Lin Ming, feeling his solid body. As he said these words of praise, he sighed in

his heart. In truth, this was the first time that he had seen Lin Ming. A branch family child had actually been able to come this far, even able to affect the future destiny of the Lin Family for the next several hundred years. The winds of fate were truly unpredictable.

Besides Lin Wanshan, several other important characters of the other families stood far away, not daring to open their mouths and greet Lin Ming. Lin Ming was now a direct disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys, and his status was comparably to a Seven Profound elder or Seven Profound Envoy. He was an existence who was even above Sky Fortune Kingdom's emperor. The difference between their status and Lin Ming's was just too great. Lin Wanshan was Lin Ming's elder, so he could tentatively speak to him, but no one else here related to him. The Seven Profound Valleys did not care about etiquette, only status. Accordingly, they should have kneeled to Lin Ming.

"House Head, have there been any beast tides at nearby cities?" Lin Ming had hurried on his way there, so he didn't understand the surrounding situation.

"Not right now. Sky Fortune Kingdom is very far from where vicious beasts usually gather, unlike the Eastern Sun Country. I fear over half of their country has already been destroyed." Lin Wanshan sighed, his voice heavy. The Eastern Sun Country had been an enemy of Sky Fortune Kingdom, but now that they had so tragically been ruined by hordes of vicious beasts, it really made one want to grieve for their loss.

At this time, a maid hurried over, reporting, "Master, the City

Lord has arrived.”

“Mm? City Lord?”

Lin Wanshan’s eyebrows picked up; he didn’t expect the City Lord to arrive so soon.

As he spoke, a stalwart looking man in his fifties, wearing a robe with kirin boots strapped to his feet strode in. He was very thin, but his bones were wide. He walked bravely and had a very strong, imposing momentum to him.

As this courageous looking man stepped into the courtyard, he had a bright and respectful smile when he greeted Lin Ming, “Green Mulberry City’s City Lord Zhao Yanming greets Hero Lin.”

As Zhao Yanming spoke, he cupped his fists together and bowed. With Lin Ming’s current status, he naturally couldn’t address him by his full name. But a direct disciple wasn’t an official, so he called him Hero Lin.

“City Lord Zhao, there’s no need to be a stranger; it’s good if you can call me Lin Ming. I grew up within Green Mulberry City, and City Lord Zhao is my elder.” Lin Ming naturally recognized Zhao Yanming. He was a City Lord who had a very just and honorable reputation in Green Mulberry City, and Lin Ming also had a favorable impression towards him.

Zhao Yanming let out a breath, his apprehensive heart calming

down. Heaven defying talents like Lin Ming, who were young, amazingly strong, and held high positions, often inevitably also had a very arrogant and reckless personality.

But it appeared that Lin Ming was a very humble and reasonable youth.

As he was about to speak, he inadvertently glanced at the Winged Flood Dragon in the courtyard. Suddenly, his complexion changed.

“This... this is a Winged Flood Dragon!?”

Zhang Yanming called the Winged Flood Dragon by its name, surprising Lin Ming. A vicious beast mount like this was something that the people of Sky Fortune Kingdom would rarely hear about.

“Young Hero Lin... is this a mount that the Seven Profound Valleys’ direct disciples can ride?” Zhao Yanming’s voice trembled. When had been a disciple of the Seven Profound Martial House, he had read about the Winged Flood Dragon in the ancient texts. It said that the Winged Flood Dragon had the bloodline of a Saint Beast, and not even mentioning its amazing speed, its strength could possibly reach the Xiantian realm!

The Xiantian realm! To the people of Sky Fortune Kingdom, a Xiantian master was a mythical figure. Could the direct disciples of the Seven Profound Valleys actually ride such a mount to travel? Or... was this treatment only reserved for Lin Ming?

Lin Ming looked at Zhao Yanming, pleasant surprise in his eyes. He said, “City Lord Zhao is truly knowledgeable. This Winged Flood Dragon is not the Seven Profound Valleys’, but mine.”

Chapter 318 – The Beast Tide Comes

“Yours?” Zhao Yanming was stunned.

“Mm... a Senior gifted this mount to me.” To a Revolving Core master like Ancestor Chi Yan, a vicious beast mount that could reach the Xiantian realm naturally wasn’t anything too precious.

“Gifted...” Zhao Yanming gulped, unable to imagine what kind of character this senior of Lin Ming’s was. They could actually so casually gift away a tamed vicious beast with Xiantian potential like this?

Of the 36 countries and 16 martial families of the Seven Profound territory, only Grace Venerate Nation, the Zhang Family, and a few other forces had a Xiantian master; the other forces simply didn’t have the ability to cultivate one. If a country had a Xiantian master guarding them, they would sleep peacefully, never needing to worry that an enemy would invade. They would have the upper hand in any diplomatic negotiations. Basically, what they said was what would be done.

If a country offended them, a Xiantian master could simply take the head of their emperor!

Thus, a vicious beast with potential to reach the Xiantian realm as an adult had an incalculable value.

Yet this sort of all-powerful creature was actually gifted to Lin Ming...

Zhao Yanming didn't know how to feel; he just stared with his mouth agape. Ultimately, he could only feel regret that this young Winged Flood Dragon hadn't grown up into an adult yet. Otherwise, with the support of a Xiantian level fighter, it wouldn't be a major problem dealing with this beast tide.

As Lin Ming returned, this message was deliberately spread forth from the City Lord's propaganda office, washing through the entire Green Mulberry City like a tide. In the morning, there were 90% less people planning on fleeing the incoming calamity. There were even some who had left, but returned after receiving the news.

The common folk didn't know just what sort of role someone like Lin Ming could play in a beast tide invasion. But, what they knew was that Lin Ming was a true hero who walked the streets of Green Mulberry City. With Lin Ming present, the people felt an invisible and vibrant faith stirring their hearts and souls.

Noon, City Lord Mansion –

Lin Ming's return alarmed all of the high ranking individuals within Green Mulberry City. If this were the past, then if someone with Lin Ming's status returned, a grand scale banquet would be held to welcome him home. The entire Green Mulberry City, including all of the celebrities and top figures of the other nearby cities would gather at this banquet, and experience the fabulous manner of Green Mulberry City's hero.

But now, faced with an enemy that brought the threat of annihilation, everyone was in a panic and weren't able to set a banquet in time.

Within the conference hall in the center of the City Lord Mansion, six or seven people had gathered around a table. These people were all of the major power players of Green Mulberry City. There were the heads of the major families, as well as Green Mulberry City's City Lord and Deputy City Lord.

Green Mulberry City's City Lord Zhao Yanming stood up first and said, "Young Hero Lin. I would first like to thank you on behalf of all the young and old citizens of Green Mulberry City. After the eruption of the beast tide, Young Hero Lin bravely crossed a great distance especially to return home."

Lin Ming waved his hand and said, "City Lord Zhao, there is no need to speak such kind words. I am also a citizen of Green Mulberry City."

"Mm... then I'll dispense with the small talk. The reason that we are gathered here in this meeting room is to discuss how Green Mulberry City should resist against a potential beast tide outbreak. First, let me introduce the others present. This here is the commander of Green Mulberry City's 10,000 garrison troops, General Zhu Ping."

Zhao Yanming pointed to a middle-aged sitting at the side of the table. This man's cultivation was at the middle Pulse Condensation period, and he had a pair of thick and heavy eyebrows. His eyes were raised, making him look particularly sharp.

“Zhu Ping greets Young Hero Lin.” Zhu Ping rose from his seat, cupping his fists in respect. Although he was just respectfully greeting him, Lin Ming felt a slight chilling murderous intent in that smiling face.

Zhu Ping?

Someone from the Zhu Family?

Green Mulberry City had several prominent families. There were the Lin, Zhu, Zhuang, Xie, and Lu families. Of these, the Zhu Family had once been the top family of Green Mulberry City. This was because an empress concubine had been born from them, and that empress had a son who also became a titled prince. This was the current Tenth Prince Yang Zhen, and was also the greatest threat to the Crown Prince’s ascendancy to the throne.

But later, the Zhu Family genius junior Zhu Yan had come into various conflicts with Lin Ming, with the end result of the Zhu Family being forced into a desperate situation with no way out. Finally, because they had no choice, the Zhu Family had been forced to expel Zhu Yan from the family.

Even so, the contradictions between the Zhu Family and Lin Ming weren’t resolved. Lin Ming supported the Crown Prince, but the Zhu Family was long tied to the Tenth Prince on the same ship. Afterwards, Lin Ming had become a direct disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys, and in that single act, the Crown Prince had been able to rise to power with the upper hand. The Tenth Prince’s

status was precarious; in this case, the situation of the Zhu Family could be imagined.

With things having come to this, how could the commander of Green Mulberry City's armed forces, Zhu Ping, not hate Lin Ming?

Not only that, but Zhu Yan had been Zhu Ping's own nephew, Zhu Ping had watched Zhu Yan grow up. Seeing this young child brimming with talent and entering the Seven Profound Martial House's Heavenly Abode in a single attempt, it was likely that he would be the next head of the Zhu Family. But he was finally forced by Lin Ming onto a desolate and lonely road. Zhu Yan had lost all contact with his family, and no one knew whether he was dead or alive.

As Zhao Yanming introduced the others, Lin Ming responded to them with a smile. But, he was able to feel that those smiling eyes of Zhu Ping contained a very faint murderous intent. This murderous intent was very hard to detect. If it wasn't for Lin Ming's soul force and perception being far above others', he would never have noticed.

After everyone at the conference was introduced, Zhao Yanming said, "So now, I would like to brief you all on the situation of the Green Mulberry Mountain Range. The Green Mulberry Mountain Range is 6000 miles long, and the southern end of it extends into the Southern Wilderness. It then becomes the South Zhao Mountain Range. The mountain range is topped with large, vibrant jungles, with countless second-level and third-level vicious beasts. There are also many vicious beasts that are equal to a Pulse Condensation period martial artist, and even those fourth-level

beasts equal to a Houtian martial artist.

“If this beast tide truly erupts, it will be difficult for us to defend Green Mulberry City with our current strength. But we believe that there is only a very small chance that the beast tide will come. The vicious beasts of the South Zhao Mountain range are much closer to the Southern Wilderness. If the beast tide erupts, there should be a higher chance that they will impact the Southern Tribes. It’s not too far away. There’s no reason for the vicious beasts to rush five or six thousand miles to attack Green Mulberry City.”

As Zhao Yanming spoke, he glanced at Lin Ming. Now, most of the people of Green Mulberry City felt as if they had been saved by a stroke of luck, and the beast tide was too far away, so the chances of it erupting were low. If a true beast tide broke out, then tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of vicious beasts would attack Green Mulberry City. At that point, the garrisoned troops at Green Mulberry City probably wouldn’t even be able to deal with the vanguard, and it would be impossibly difficult for Green Mulberry City to stall until the armies came.

Lin Ming thought for a moment, and then slowly said, “I do not know if a beast tide will erupt from the South Zhao Mountain Range, but what I do know is that once a beast tide emerges from the South Zhao Mountain Range, they will absolutely not attack the Southern Wilderness. They will climb mountains, cross rivers, and travel the five or six thousand miles to attack Green Mulberry City.”

“Mm? Why?” Zhao Yanming’s heart went cold as he heard Lin

Ming's words. Although Lin Ming was young, with his identity, he wouldn't be one to speak nonsense.

Lin Ming said, "Because this beast tide is planned by man. The goal of the enemy is to forcefully annex the entire Divine Phoenix Province, the 19 third-grade sects within and the countries under their jurisdiction. Even our Seven Profound Valleys is included among them. But the Southern Wilderness is a remote land with no large sect; it naturally could not be considered a target."

What?

Lin Ming's words scared everyone present!

Planned by man?

Annex the entire Divine Phoenix Province?

The Seven Profound Valleys was only a single area?

This was just too shocking! Everyone present simply had never heard of the Divine Phoenix Province before. But listening to the intent behind Lin Ming's words, it seemed that the Seven Profound Valleys was just one of the 19 third-grade sects within. The scope of the Divine Phoenix Province might be several times larger than the several hundred thousand miles large Seven Profound territory, or even dozens of times larger!

What kind of terrifying supernatural power could drive all of the

vicious beasts in a radius of millions of miles into such a frenzy that vicious beasts tides would erupt?

With their experience and knowledge, this was simply an unfathomable act.

“Young Hero Lin, these words of yours sound a bit like some fantasy novel...” Zhu Ping’s fingers gently tapped against the table, a smile creasing his face. Although he was smiling, his words were filled with a mocking tone.

“Does Army Command Zhu not believe me?” Lin Ming asked, his eyes narrowing.

“Of course I believe! What kind of status does Young Hero Lin have, Young Hero Lin would never speak nonsense, your words are definitely true. I am just a trivial shortsighted person of Green Mulberry City, no different than a frog in a well. My experience is limited, it’s difficult for me to imagine such a mighty power.” As Zhu Ping spoke, he always wore a respectful smile, as if he were truly speaking self-deprecating words.

Lin Ming faintly smiled, not responding.

Zhu Ping then said, “Since Young Hero Lin is so assured, then once the beast tide erupts, they will inevitably come straight to Green Mulberry City. How does Young Hero Lin believe we should face this crisis?”

“Keep a strong defense until support arrives.”

“Mm... as far as I know, Young Hero Lin has a mount equal to a late Houtian realm martial artist, called a Winged Flood Dragon. Right now, this Winged Flood Dragon should have the strongest fighting strength within Green Mulberry City. I wonder if Young Hero Lin minds lending the Winged Flood Dragon to the military?” Zhu Ping unhurriedly spoke as his eyebrows rose in a questioning challenge.

“Mm?” Lin Min frowned. He wanted to borrow the Winged Flood Dragon?

Why would Zhu Ping want to borrow the Winged Flood Dragon? A Winged Flood Dragon wasn't of much use to the military.

The Winged Flood dragon wasn't an adult yet. Within such a large-scale beast flood, if it were improperly commanded, it would be in danger of being killed. Lin Ming didn't want to lend his Winged Flood Dragon to the military. If his Winged Flood Dragon really died, all they could do was apologize, and Lin Ming would truly regret it.

Thinking this, Lin Ming said, “The Winged Flood Dragon has a very wild and unruly nature; it is impossible for your soldiers to control it. If I lend it to you, then you will not be able to use it. I will keep it with me where it can display the strongest war strength.”

“Of course... what a pity.” Zhu Ping's lips twitched, grimly

sighing.

This beast tide was a perfect opportunity to kill off Lin Ming!

The Zhu Family and the Tenth Prince were on the same boat together, there was no escape for either of them. As long as Lin Ming stayed alive, their defeat was a foregone conclusion.

Two days ago, Ouyang Boyan had been recalled back to the Seven Profound Valleys' Total Faction because of the destruction of the Moon Seizing Clan. Before Ouyang Boyan departed, he left behind two trusted subordinates to ambush Lin Ming; one in Sky Fortune City, and the other in Green Mulberry City.

The one lurking in Green Mulberry City had a strength at the late Houtian realm. His strength was just a step away from the peak Houtian realm.

In Zhu Ping's opinion, if Lin Ming returned alone, then with the strength of Ouyang Boyan's trusted subordinate, he would be able to assassinate Lin Ming.

But now Lin Ming had a Winged Flood Dragon. Not only was this Winged Flood Dragon very fast, but its strength reached the late Houtian realm. Like this, it would be very difficult to kill Lin Ming...

Thus, Zhu Ping had thought of an excuse to borrow the Winged Flood Dragon. But he had actually been declined by Lin Ming!

Chapter 319 – Brutal Melee

As Zhu Ping was planning on how to kill Lin Ming in the chaos of the battlefield, a flame suddenly lit in front of him; this was a sound transmitting talisman from a scout.

After hearing this sound transmission, Zhu Ping's complexion changed.

“Army Command Zhu? What is it?” Zhao Yanming asked as he stood up.

“The beast tide has arrived. In less than half an hour it will reach Green Mulberry City.” Zhu Ping whispered, his voice harsh. The military had sent out a number of scouts to keep watch over the Green Mulberry Mountain Range. He had just received the news from one of these scouts through a series of sound transmitting talismans.

“So they've come...” Zhao Yanming's lips twitched and he slumped back into his seat. He had always been holding out on his single, faint hope. But now, that fleeting hope had been shattered against the ground.

“How serious is the situation?” Zhuang Fan asked.

“They are sheltered under the forest's cover, the scout wasn't able to determine how many there were. The strongest among them are third-level beasts, probably equal to a Pulse Condensation martial artist.” As Zhu Ping spoke, he put on an iron helmet. The

10,000 troops of Green Mulberry City had already lined up in formation in the outskirts of Green Mulberry City. Half an hour of time was just enough to prepare.

Zhu Ping glanced at Lin Ming, “Young Hero Lin, will you...”

“Mm. I’ll go to battle with you.” At this dire moment, Lin Ming was not someone who would shirk his responsibilities.

With Lin Ming’s current status, if things were normal and he had noticed Zhu Ping’s hostility towards him, he could have casually killed him even without a shred of evidence, and no one would have dared to utter a single word of protest. But now, vicious beasts were approaching the city, and Zhu Ping was the commander of Green Mulberry City’s garrison troops. Because of that, it was impossible for Lin Ming kill him.

“Thank you, Young Hero Lin. Let us set off at once.”

.....

The garrison troops were stationed 10 miles south of Green Mulberry City.

The sky was replete with dark clouds. Although it was spring, the chill of winter hadn’t yet evaporated, and a cold wind blew through the plains. 10,000 troops were arranged in a giant formation, silently waiting for the bloody battle.

Flags fluttered in the air, and the cold tips of soldiers' halberds, swords, and other weapons shined with killing intent. In truth, all of the best soldiers within Sky Fortune Kingdom had joined the frontier army. Green Mulberry City's garrison troops could only be considered a second-rate army. But in this dire situation, they showed a hardened edge and jagged spirit that only tempered veterans had; accustomed to blood and iron, with an unflinching momentum that was unafraid of death.

This was because this was not a fight over land, nor was it a political war. This was a battle for survival. Their city was behind them. If they fell on this field, their parents would die, their wives would die, and their children would die.

Mixed within these armed forces were over 100 outside martial artists. These individuals had voluntarily joined the garrison army at this time of need. All of these individuals had strange appearances. There were some who carried symbol flags and looked like old fortune tellers. There were those who wore bamboo hats and looked like woodcutters. And there were even those who wore long, loose robes, looking no different than a scholar. These people were all between 20 and 50 years old, and all of them had overflowing strong auras of the mortal Jianghu.

And what most surprised Lin Ming was that six of these individuals were Pulse Condensation period martial artists. It had to be known that most Pulse Condensation martial artists would join the government and be bestowed a noble title. There were very few that wandered around in the common world. Even if there was, it was nearly impossible for six of them to suddenly gather within Green Mulberry City.

Green Mulberry City Lord Zhao Yanming said, “Let me introduce you. This is Green Mulberry City’s Salt Clan’s Clan Leader, Shi Linkai.” Zhao Yanming pointed to a middle-aged man wearing a wolf pelt, introducing him to Lin Ming.

Since ancient times, dynasties had taken control of the salt and iron industries in order to control the economic lifeline of their lands. They could sell salt at profits of ten times, or even dozens of times.

This so-called Salt Clan was in fact just an illegal bandit gang that dealt in salt. These sorts of gangs had existed in all eras, and they were of an enormous scale. They often contained over 90% of the mortal world’s martial artists. These people were people of the so-called ‘Jianghu’, and they were individualistic people who viewed the government with disdain. They had their own groups and cliques, and formed clans, groups, and gangs, taking loyalty as their main guideline.

Green Mulberry City’s Salt Clan was the largest private power within the entire Sky Fortune Kingdom. During normal times, Green Mulberry City’s Salt Clan would have been at odds with the military. But now, in this situation, both groups had to ally together and assume a united front against the incoming beast tide.

“Hero Lin! I’ve heard so much about you, and now I can finally see you today.” Shi Linkai cupped his fists together. He already knew of Lin Ming’s status. To outlaws and vagabonds, what they most respected were powerful heroes. Shi Linkai was no exception.

“Clan Leader Shi is too kind.” Lin Ming cupped his fists together in respect, a bit surprised. This Shi Linkai’s cultivation was actually at the late Pulse Condensation period. Although, it was obvious that he had barely broken through, his foundation was shaky, and it would be hopeless for him to break through to the Houtian realm in his lifetime. Still, it was difficult for a roaming wanderer of the mortal world to reach this step.

After hurriedly greeting the people of the Salt Clan, Lin Ming quickly went to the front. The beast tide was less than a quarter of an hour away from arriving.

After Lin Ming left, Shi Linkai constantly shook his head in admiration, his heart amazed by Lin Ming’s astonishing talent.

“Boss, this is just a little boy. His cultivation just reaches the middle Pulse Condensation period, and yet he managed to win some sort of valley’s martial meeting and became champion? What sort of master is that?” The middle-aged man who spoke wore a bamboo hat and held an iron staff in his hand, his voice full of doubt. He assumed that this martial meeting should have been a gathering of true masters, and the champion should be at least at the Houtian realm.

The truth was, to these roaming figures of the common world, although they knew how terrifying Lin Ming’s status was, they didn’t have an intuitive concept of just how powerful people like him actually were.

To the common folk, the Seven Profound Valleys was a remote existence. Before Lin Ming had entered the Seven Profound

Martial House, he had only heard of the Seven Profound Valleys' name. But he wasn't clear as to what they were, or how strong they were. To these Salt Clan disciples, the Seven Profound Valleys was the same as them; they were also a clan, but just on a larger scale.

“What nonsense. The Seven Profound Valleys' Total Faction Martial Meeting is a contest between young talents, of course the champion is going to be a little boy. Don't look at him just being at the middle Pulse Condensation period. If we really fight, then even if Second Brother and Third Brother coordinate with me, we probably wouldn't win.” Shi Linkai stared at the middle-aged man in the bamboo hat, in a wise and learned tone. The Second Brother and Third Brother he mentioned were the second and third in command of the Salt Clan. Their cultivations were at the middle Pulse Condensation period and the early Pulse Condensation period.

“How could that be... Second Brother has already been at the middle Pulse Condensation period for 10 years, and is just a step away from reaching the late Pulse Condensation period. If Boss and Third Big Brother join with Second Big Brother, the three of you together would still lose against a little boy who just reached the middle Pulse Condensation period?”

“Just wait and see. The difference between the Seven Profound Valleys and us is just like the difference between the Royal Family and a rich country merchant. Maybe this Young Hero's strength already reaches a Houtian realm master!”

.....

As Lin Ming stood in front of the army, he grasped the Purple Comet Spear, slanting the spearpoint towards the ground. In this upcoming battle of life or death, where either side would be annihilated, it would be wrong to say that there were no mighty waves that surged through his heart. In the worst case scenario, Green Mulberry City would be trampled over, and his home would be utterly destroyed.

However, Lin Ming's parents as well as his best friend Lin Xiaodong were no longer at Green Mulberry City. As for the Lin Family, Lin Ming's feelings towards them were much lighter. If the Lin Family was destroyed, it was not a blow that he wouldn't be able to withstand. If the worst case situation came to fruition, he would use the Winged Flood Dragon to save several of the important family juniors, and ensure that their family's bloodline would be preserved.

Perhaps... Lin Wanshan might have already transferred part of the family.

As Lin Ming was thinking, he saw some blurry shadows appear on the horizon. These shadows started out the size of flying insects, but in a few dozen breaths of time, they covered the heavens and the earth.

The beast tide had finally arrived!

The ones to arrive first were naturally the fastest flying vicious beasts. Looking at them, there were probably several hundred.

“There’s only several hundred, and most of them are first-level or second-level vicious beasts. The highest among them are only third-level vicious beasts. Like this, we can still make it.”

Lin Ming was very clear that the vicious beasts that lived within the depths of the Southern Wilderness weren’t gathered together, but instead dispersed into groups. All of the vicious beasts would emerge from the South Zhao Mountain Range, forming a beast tide. But there would be gaps between these groups. The weakest appetizers would be at the front, and the later groups would be increasingly strong. This gave Green Mulberry City a breath of hope. With this opportunity, they might be able to last until reinforcements arrived.

“Javelin throwers, archers, prepare!”

With Zhu Ping’s shout, 200 javelin throwers and 500 archers immediately readied.

The javelin troops that Sky Fortune Kingdom had trained were specially formed to deal with heavy infantry phalanxes. Their javelins could pierce through a palm-thick shield, and against these flying beasts, only a javelin would be able to threaten the large destructive ones. An arrow was too light, it simply couldn’t damage them.

But Green Mulberry City’s garrison troops weren’t an elite army. There was a very expensive cost in training a javelin thrower, thus there were just a mere 200 of them.

As the vicious beasts entered into firing range, a messenger raised the signal flag, and 700 soldiers fired together!

Whiz whiz whiz!

With the whistling sound of splitting air, sharp javelins and arrows shot up like a hurricane. Many of the airborne vicious beasts were pierced with arrows, and there were some first-level and second-level vicious beasts that were wounded in multiple areas, directly falling from the air.

Falling from several hundred feet, they were instantly splattered to death upon reaching the ground. There was no need for the troops to rush forwards and finish them off.

In that moment, of the several hundred vicious beasts, dozens of them had died in a flash. However, these were just the lowest-level vicious beasts. There were about a dozen third-level vicious beasts with strength equal to a normal Pulse Condensation period martial artist that were unscathed.

Moreover, after this volley, the vicious beast group had already reached the army. A third-level vicious beast that looked like a giant blue-eyed falcon dove into a group of soldiers, immediately causing a shower of blood.

“Son of a b*tch! Come down to me!”

As the third-level vicious beast was about to shoot back into the

sky, the Salt Clan helped Shi Linkai spring into the sky. His saber slashed down, immediately slicing off a wing of the blue-eyed falcon beast.

“Cawww!”

The blue-eyed falcon issued a keening wail as it fell from the sky, landing in a circle of soldiers where it was stabbed to death.

“Boss, good job!”

The Salt Clan juniors issued a volley of cheers. A single saber strike had brought down a third-level vicious beast, this caused the coalition army’s morale to rise to the heavens!

“Fierce!”

“Truly worthy of a late Pulse Condensation master!”

“Brothers, what are you waiting for, kill ‘em all!”

The soldiers’ cheers were thunderous. For a time, javelins, arrows and spears all stabbed into vicious beasts!

Cold metal shined, blood rained like a spring shower, the masters of the Salt Clan became the sword and saber of the entire army. But, their power also attracted the attention of the other three third-level vicious beasts.

These vicious beasts began to veer towards the Salt Clan masters.

Chapter 320 – Sweeping Away All

Third-level vicious beasts could also be divided into the strong and the weak. The strength of third-level vicious beasts could range from the late Bone Forging state to the peak Pulse Condensation period.

The blue-eyed falcon beast that was cut down by Shi Linkai's saber had been the weakest of the third-level vicious beasts, and its strength was only equal to an early Pulse Condensation period martial artist.

Over a dozen third-level vicious beasts shot towards the Salt Clan masters together. The six Pulse Condensation martial artists of the Salt Clan were immediately overwhelmed.

“Go die!”

The Salt Clan's second-in-command drew out a thick saber, slashing down hard on a winged wolf. But the attack was only a slash; the body of the winged wolf was as hard as diamond. It wasn't seriously injured at all.

In a split-second, the tables had turned and the masters of the Salt Clan were surrounded by danger. But Lin Ming's eyes brightened. He had naturally chosen to kill these high-level vicious beasts, but was worried that they would be too scattered in the air, and it would be difficult to kill them. He hadn't expected that Shi Linkai would manage to attract their attention, causing these third-level vicious beasts to gather together. This was the perfect

opportunity to wipe them all out.

“First Spear Team, support them!” Although Zhu Ping hoped very much that these fellows who ruined the taxes of Green Mulberry City every year would die, at this time, he had to rely on them to defend the city.

The Salt Clan masters had originally been with the javelin throwers and the archers, but now the archers had retreated, their spot was filled by a more dense, spear wielding military group. Such a change was not easy. The garrison army of Green Mulberry City wasn't an elite unit, so their formations and movements were a bit messy.

“Ho!”

A Blood Crow howled. Its strength was equal to a late Pulse Condensation period martial artist, and it wanted to directly tear a hole through the layers of troops. However, just as it picked up some spear wielding soldiers and was about to fly back into the sky, hundreds and thousands of azure light beams shot forwards.

These azure light beams converged on a single target, sinking directly into the Blood Crow's body.

Peng!

With a muffled sound, the Blood Crow trembled, and then blood spurted out from its head. It tumbled down from the sky, but

because it was too fast and the inertia from falling a hundred feet was too great, a pile of soldiers on the ground were knocked away. The other soldiers lifted their spears to stab the vicious beast, but found that both of the Blood Crow's eyes had already exploded, and chunks of internal organs were spewing forth from its beak. It was long dead.

The truth was, in that moment when the azure true essence had struck it, its internal organs had all been instantly torn apart by the power of vibration.

“It's... it's dead?”

The soldiers couldn't even react before they heard sharp whistling sounds in the air. Multiple beams of azure true essence shot forth.

Every true essence ray would unerringly strike their target, sinking into a third-level beast's body. A moment ago, these vicious beasts had been savage killing monsters. But after they were struck by an azure light ray of true essence, they tumbled down like broken kites, their entire bodies twitching and bleeding from every hole, dead beyond dead.

In just a few breaths of time, 11 of the 13 third-level vicious beasts had died, and the two leftover weren't in great shape either. The survivors turned around to fly away. Naturally, Lin Ming wouldn't give them any hope of leaving alive. He flicked his fingers and two rays of azure true essence ran them down. With two light sounds, the two vicious beasts in the air fell to the earth.

Finally, after the two vicious beasts smashed the ground, they had become puddles of crushed meat. One fell into the group of Salt Clan masters, and the other fell within a phalanx of long spear soldiers.

As the people looked at these two third-level beasts that had died such a pitifully horrific death, almost no one could believe it.

They all died... like this?

From start to finish, Lin Ming hadn't even used his spear. He merely flicked out ray after ray of strange azure light beams, and every strange light beam would instantly kill a third-level vicious beast in a simple and ruthless fashion.

“Ka! Ka!”

After the third-level vicious beasts were instantly killed, the first-level and second-level vicious cried out in alarm, then turned around and began to fly away.

“Block them!”

Lin Ming's eyes narrowed. These vicious beasts were only the vanguard. Once the vicious beasts on land made their way here, the true war would begin. At that time, when these flying beasts returned, it would cause a great deal of trouble. Now that they were defeated and retreating, it was best to kill as many as

possible.

After Lin Ming's awe-inspiring performance, his words had unwittingly become like a military order to the soldiers. All of the javelin throwers and archers were stunned for a moment, and then immediately reacted, firing as fast as they could.

Lin Ming also began to flick out more rays of vibrating azure true essence, aiming towards the strongest second-level vicious beasts. As for the first-level vicious beasts, he basically ignored them.

The rays of vibrating azure true essence were Lin Ming's most effortless attack method. Before the real battle began, Lin Ming wanted to save up every bit of energy he could; every attack he sent out contained just the right amount of force to be lethal. He was well aware that in a protracted battle, he had to conserve his strength.

Puff! Puff! Puff! Puff! Puff! Puff!

All sorts of dangerous flying vicious beasts began to fall down from the sky, blood showering forth like rain, and bits of meat flying everywhere. Of the several hundred flying vicious beasts that had come, only a few dozen had managed to escape.

As the man in the bamboo hat saw dozens of flying vicious beats fall from the air because of Lin Ming, and the rest also fleeing, he gulped, his voice trembling as he said, "Boss... you... what you said was right. Even if you add Second Big Brother and Third Big Brother together, you aren't a match for that boy. Is... is he really a

middle Pulse Condensation martial artist?”

Shi Linkai’s throat twitched, and he ruefully smiled. Let alone three of them, even a dozen of them together wouldn’t be able to do anything. As long as those azure beams of light came towards them, they would die without a doubt!

What was that azure true essence attack?

They were all Pulse Condensation period martial artists right? How could the gap between them be so great?

While Shi Linkai was in wonder of Lin Ming’s power, he actually hadn’t noticed that behind him, just near the long long spear soldiers, there was a black-clothed middle-aged man staring at Lin Ming with gloom in his eyes, the corners of his mouth twitching.

“He doesn’t even need his spear to reach this level? Ah, this makes things so much trickier...”

The flying vicious beasts had just retreated. Everyone hadn’t even had time to catch their breath, when suddenly horrifying roars and hisses sounded out in the distance.

“Roar!”

“Roar!”

The land-borne vicious beasts had finally attacked! This was a true battle; there were several times more vicious beasts on land than the vicious beasts flying in the air!

Rumble rumble rumble!

The stampeding vicious beasts were just like billowing thunder. Tens of thousands of vicious beasts rampaged forwards, wild and savage. This scene was both terrifying and spectacular, the whole earth trembled!

The vicious beasts that were at the front were packs of Corrupt Wolves. A Corrupt Wolf was a second-level vicious beast, and its strength was equal to an Altering Muscle stage martial artist. They were similar to rabid dogs as they rushed forwards, their tongues out, white fangs exposed, green eyes filled with a crazy killing and bloodthirsty intent. These were vicious beasts that desired to tear into the bodies of their enemies!

A Corrupt Wolf was a vicious beast that only existed in the Southern Wilderness. After Lin Ming had left the Sorcerer Holy Land, he seen that two Corrupt Wolves had almost taken the Na Sisters' lives. They ate the corpses of dead creatures all year long, and their claws were steeped in corpse poison. After being caught by one, it was very easy to die from the following poison.

This poison had an antidote. But in the middle of life and death fighting, who had the time to apply an antidote?

“Che! This is really troublesome!”

“Shield soldiers in the front, protect the long spear soldiers!” With this order, the soldiers wearing 100 jin heavy armor picked up giant tower shields, lifting them high and forming a barrier. The long spear soldiers fitted into the gaps of the shield soldiers, thrusting out their spears through the gaps of the tower shields.

Suddenly, the entire formation of soldiers became a charging line of defense with a forest of spears. The momentum of this charge was no weaker than the tens of thousands of vicious beasts!

This was the power of an army. No matter how strong Lin Ming was, it was impossible for a lone person to block the entire beast tide from reaching Green Mulberry City. But, if 10,000 soldiers created a great wall forged of flesh and steel, it was possible!

“Awoo! Awoo! Awooo! Ao! Ao! Awoo!”

As the Corrupt Wolves rushed halfway, they began to scream one at a time, stumbling to the ground. They were buried by the beasts behind them that were running at full speed. As a Corrupt Wolf fell to the ground, it was easy for it to cause other Corrupt Wolves to also stumble. As a result, a massive number of Corrupt Wolves were trampled to death within the raging stampede!

Because of time constraints, the garrison army of Green Mulberry City hadn't been able to ready too many animal traps. After several thousands of Corrupt Wolves died, the rest finally reached the front line of the army.

“Release the sharp wood formation!”

With a shout from a messenger, rows of sharpened logs were pulled up from the ground at slanted angles, their sharp tips pointed towards the Corrupt Wolves.

Puff! Puff! Puff!

Many of the Corrupt Wolves could not dodge. They directly ran into the sharpened wooden logs. As they were rushing forwards at such a high speed, the sharpened logs pierced through their entire body from head to tail, instantly kill them.

Peng peng peng!

After the sharpened logs was the last line of defense. A massive number of Corrupt Wolves slammed onto heavy shields, and some soldiers that could not withstand the impact were sent flying backwards.

“Spear formation!”

1000 long spear soldiers thrust forth their spears from between the slits of the tower shields, stabbing into the soft bellies of the Corrupt Wolves, blood splattering everywhere, organs bursting out.

Although the soldiers were individually weaker than the Corrupt Wolves by far, with the coordination of a battle formation and

equipment, they could display a total strength that was far more formidable than their individual strength.

Lin Ming shook his spear and rushed out of the army camp. Closely following behind him were the masters of the Salt Clan. The other masters of the prominent families didn't back down. Even the heads of major families like Lin Wanshan and Zhuang Fan were in the lead.

In this moment of life or death, no one dared to hold back anything.

Shi Linkai rushed forwards, his five foot long saber cutting forth in an epic manner. With every saber slice, large volumes of blood would spray into the air.

Shi Linkai was most suited for this kind of rampaging killing spree, as his saber was meant to storm forwards, cutting away everything in its path. Coupled with his late Pulse Condensation cultivation, he was able to massacre the Altering Muscle stage Corrupt Wolves like they were chickens.

The other martial artists, including Lin Wanshan, Zhuang Fan, Lu Wuyin, and the rest, were slightly weaker, and their swords weren't as good at fighting against large groups. But their killing speed still wasn't slow. With every chop of their blades, a Corrupt Wolf would die.

Shi Linkai was filled with an addicting bloodlust. In just a dozen breaths of time, he had killed a dozen Corrupt Wolves! He killed an

average of one Corrupt Wolf per breath of time!

A man and his saber, unstoppable!

Such killing speed could be called terrifying. But when Shi Linkai inadvertently glanced at Lin Ming, in that instant, he suddenly sucked in a breath of cold air.

Lin Ming waved his hand, and the spear in his grip shot forth like an arrow. Seven or eight Corrupt Wolves were pierced by his spear!

Chapter 321 – Hidden Murderous Intent

Lin Ming threw the long spear. With a metallic clang, the Purple Comet Spear's base was suddenly connected by a taut red chain!

Fire that had manifested into a crimson red chain had attached onto the end of the spear!

“Total Annihilation!”

Lin Ming waved the red chain in his hand, with himself as the center. The Purple Comet Spear drew a massive full moon. Wherever the spear went, Corrupt Wolves exploded like bags of blood!

In only a single breath of time, over 20 Corrupt Wolves died a horrible death. Then Lin Ming moved, instantly appearing in another place on the battlefield!

With a shout, he swept a giant circle with his spear once again, over a dozen Corrupt Wolves decimated!

“This is just too inhuman...”

Shi Linkai gulped. Although a Corrupt Wolf wasn't considered too strong, it had a robust and hardy body. To cut a wolf in half from the waist took at least 80 or 90% of Shi Linkai's strength. Once he chopped too many times, his arm began to feel sore.

But every time Lin Ming shot out with his spear, he would pierce seven or eight beasts. With a sweep, more than a dozen would perish.

This was inhumanly savage power!

Lin Ming's power was already far beyond the level of a normal martial artist. Especially after he had completed a small portion of Tempering Marrow within his right hand, his strength had risen to another level. It could simply be called unstoppable, able to break through even the toughest defenses.

Not only that, but the Purple Comet Spear was an incomparably sharp weapon. Although the Corrupt Wolf had a strong defense, that was only in comparison to a normal martial artist. In front of the top high-grade earth-step Purple Comet Spear, the defensive capabilities of a Corrupt Wolf were no different than tofu!

As Lin Ming killed his way around the battlefield, Corrupt Wolves were reaped like wheat. Against these second-level Corrupt Wolves, there was no need to use his vibrating true essence. Slaughtering them with the spear was the best way to conserve his strength.

The spear was a weapon that was inherently forged to engage in mass warfare.

At this moment, Lin Ming heard a roar and saw a massive two-headed black wolf rushing towards him. Two-headed Corrupt Wolf?

This was a top third-level vicious beast, and its strength was comparable to a peak Pulse Condensation master.

Then there was another roar, and next to the two-headed wolf was a giant Iron Storm Bear. Its strength was no less than that of the two-headed Corrupt Wolf. And what was terrifying was that the Iron Storm Bear had an amazing defensive power. Within all of the third-level vicious beasts in the Seven Profound territory, it had the absolute strongest defense!

In a massive assault of forces, a vicious beast with astounding defense was much more formidable and difficult to deal with than an agile vicious beast!

Two top third-level vicious beasts appeared, charging straight towards the army's formation!

If these vicious beasts were to rush into the formation, they would easily be able to rip their way through the soldiers' tower shield wall, creating a massive opening. Once a gap was opened in the defenses, vicious beasts would begin pouring in from there!

Lin Ming chose to greet them first.

Shi Linkai's eyes widened as he watched Lin Ming run over. He also wanted to run over and help, at least to divert the attention of the Corrupt Wolves surrounding him so that Lin Ming would be able to kill those two top third-level vicious beasts more easily. But at this moment, Lin Ming's speed reached an extreme, and he

suddenly turned into a fading afterimage.

As his steps treaded forwards with Golden Roc Shattering the Void, the packs of Corrupt Wolves that tried to block Lin Ming were simply useless.

Pu pu pu!

Blood sprayed into the air. All of the Corrupt Wolves in Lin Ming's path were torn apart by his spear! As Lin Ming rapidly moved ahead, all that was left behind was a brilliant fog of blood!

“Roar!”

Facing this insolent human, the Iron Storm Bear sent out angry roars. The Two-headed Corrupt Wolf King also howled, rushing towards Lin Ming.

Lin Ming didn't even pause, his spear pierced forwards!

Ka!

An azure spear light cut through the void, slashing straight towards the Iron Storm Bear. Its chest was ripped in half, blood gushing out!

The azure spear light actually hadn't even been given the slightest pause by the Iron Storm Bear's tenacious body. This was a

top third-level vicious beast known for having the strongest level of defensive power within the Seven Profound territory, but in front of the Purple Comet Spear, its vaunted defenses were nothing more than thin paper!

After the azure spear light ripped through the Iron Storm Bear, its forward force still hadn't stopped, cutting towards the Two-Headed Corrupt Wolf King. The Two-Headed Corrupt Wolf King was famous for its speed, but it simply didn't have a chance to respond; its body was split vertically in half, one head on each side!

A single spear move slayed two top third-level vicious beasts! It was no different to killing an ordinary Corrupt Wolf!

Shi Linkai was dumbfounded. Even Zhuang Fan, Lu Wuyin, and the others sucked in a breath of cold air. What sort of cultivation was that? They couldn't imagine how an early Pulse Condensation period martial artist could be so strong that they could instantly kill two third-level vicious beasts that were equal to peak Pulse Condensation martial artists. Not only that, but he had only used a single spear move to kill both of them!

Before, they didn't know just what it meant for Lin Ming to become champion of the Seven Profound Valleys' Total Faction Martial Meeting. They only knew that Lin Ming was a great and powerful figure, and had created a record that had never existed in the past 200 years in the 36 countries by becoming the champion of the Total Faction Martial Meeting. But they never knew just what sort of concept that was. But now that they had a front-seat view, they were able to experience what this title truly meant.

After he killed the two third-level vicious beasts, Lin Ming's footsteps suddenly paused, and his spear slowed down. In that instant, he had once again felt a faint hidden murderous intent from the crowds of people around him...

“You want to hide yourself with the help of the crowd?”

Lin Ming coldly snorted. His soul force and perception already far surpassed the Seven Profound Valleys' Mirage Faction's. When he first struck out, he had felt this faint murderous intent. Now, after killing the two third-level vicious beasts, he felt it again.

But by the time he expanded his perception, he had lost trace of this person, and was unable to find him.

This caused Lin Ming to furrow his eyebrows. This enemy of his must be well versed in concealment techniques, and was able to use the killing intent of the 10,000 strong army to hide from him. Was this someone sent by Ouyang Boyan?

After the Moon Seizing Sect had been annihilated, all of the Xiantian masters were recalled to the Seven Profound Valleys' Total Faction. With the collaboration of the Array Faction and an array master of Divine Phoenix Island, they had been able to set up a giant reinforced array formation around the mountain range and close it off, to prevent a sneak attack from the South Sea Demon Region. Since this happened, Ouyang Boyan had probably left behind several trustworthy subordinates within Sky Fortune Kingdom.

Murdering a Seven Profound Valleys direct disciple was no minor matter. If this matter was made known, then Ouyang Boyan would most likely be put to death. He could probably only trust his personal apprentice...

Logically speaking, an apprentice of Ouyang Boyan should be someone from the Acacia Faction. But Lin Ming didn't think that a disciple from the Acacia Faction would be so proficient in concealment techniques. If it wasn't for Lin Ming's prodigious soul perception, he would never have been aware of this.

With a hidden enemy lurking behind him, Lin Ming couldn't feel at ease. 'I can't expose any more of my strength! This enemy probably hasn't noticed that I've discovered him. In this case, I have to keep my cards in hand and lure him in, take him by surprise, and kill him in that moment.'

Lin Ming's single spear move that had killed two third-level vicious beasts may have been shocking to a common martial artist, but it was simply nothing to a genius of the Seven Profound Valleys. Not to mention Lin Ming, Jiang Lanjian, Qin Wuxin, or even the most disappointing direct disciple Fang Qi, would be able to accomplish the same.

Those two monsters were equal to a normal peak Pulse Condensation martial artist, but Huan Xiaodie and Fang Qi had battle power that reached the early Houtian realm, or even the middle Houtian realm.

With such a difference in strength, instantly killing a pair of third-level vicious beasts was simple!

Thus, Lin Ming's performance just now was all within this hidden killer's expectations.

Lin Ming had to keep his other cards hidden. He needed to hide his strength so he could play the pig to eat the tiger.

'I will suppress my strength to the peak of the normal middle Houtian realm, and lure you in!'

During the stampede of the beast tide, this surrounding chaos was naturally the best time to assassinate Lin Ming. But it was also the best time for Lin Ming to kill this hidden enemy of his. Lin Ming didn't want to leave a ticking time bomb at his side; he wanted to completely uproot and eradicate all of Ouyang Boyan's influence.

"Total Annihilation!"

"Sweeping Wind, Scattering Clouds!"

Every move that Lin Ming made was a wide-range attack. With the flame chain on the spear end, the Purple Comet Spear was like a Flood Dragon diving in a sea of blood. Wherever it went, blood would rain!

Within the chaotic rush of clashing forces, the spear was absolutely the best weapon!

Of course, the requirement was to have an incomparably thick true essence and endurance in order to support such terrifying killing speeds!

But these were two aspects that were no problem for Lin Ming; he did not lack them at all.

His blood vitality was potent, and every breath he breathed out formed large snakes in the air that lingered on.

“Die!”

Lin Ming gripped the fiery red chain, the spear point drawing a huge half-moon arc. Blood spattered all over Lin Ming, covering his entire bodies muscle in a deep crimson shade. The veins of his body bulged out, just like twisted scarlet earthworms.

Puff puff puff!

The garrison army of Green Mulberry City took Lin Ming as the spearpoint of the army and courageously marched forwards. Within 100 feet of Lin Ming, vicious beasts were simply unable to approach. Once they did, they were completely destroyed by the spear light!

Even if there was an occasional third-level vicious beast that appeared with power comparable to a Pulse Condensation martial artist, it was still no exception. It would be just like an ordinary vicious beast, instantly slaughtered by Lin Ming!

“This is too fierce; is this the power of the Seven Profound Valleys’ Total Faction Martial Meeting Champion?”

“The vicious beasts that he has killed by himself are more than the rest of us combined!” Zhuang Fan’s cultivation was just enough to reach the Pulse Condensation period, and he also fought with a sword, so his killing speed was the slowest. As he saw Lin Ming rush into the depths of a pack of vicious beasts, and be no different than a tiger within a flock of sheep, he couldn’t help but envy. “Brother Wanshan, your Lin Family has truly produced a peerless monstrous talent. Within the next several hundred years, your Lin Family will probably become the top family of Sky Fortune Kingdom.”

Lin Wanshan wasn’t as happy as Zhuang Fang expected. Instead, he sighed, shaking his head, his heart bitter.

Some time ago, when the snow had still been falling, Lin Ming had obtained a great honor for the Lin Family to truly earn face for posterity.

But now that Lin Wanshan saw Lin Ming’s formidable strength with his own eyes, he suddenly had very complicated thoughts and emotions surging within him. A question lingered within his heart, one that he couldn’t let go of.

Could Lin Ming really be considered a disciple of the Lin Family?

Before Lin Ming had grown up, he hadn’t even used a single bit of

the Lin Family's resources!

Lin Wanshan even knew that when Lin Ming's childhood girlfriend had abandoned him for someone else, he hadn't been able to receive any help from the family. Lin Ming probably didn't feel much of a sense of belonging to the Lin Family...

If Lin Wanshan had anyone to blame, he could only blame his own Lin Family for not being able to see someone with such an outstanding talent in front of them. They had missed the chance to raise such a precious uncut jade. Otherwise, if they had been able to initially offer him help, provide resources, and help him recapture his first love, or even confront the Zhu Family because of that, then Lin Ming would have a deep sense of belonging towards the Lin Family. But now...

Lin Wanshan sighed with regret. But then, his heart suddenly skipped a beat. His eyes widened as he looked at a red shadow not too far away that was heading towards them.

“This is bad, that is... a fourth-level vicious beast, Scarlet Flood Python!”

Chapter 322 – Beheading the Python

The Scarlet Flood Python was over 200 feet long, and its writhing body was thicker than a century-old tree. Every red scale of its body was larger than a soldier's tower shield, and its sharp fangs were like spears. When it opened its mouth, it was wide enough to swallow an elephant.

This python monster was only the weakest of the fourth-level vicious beasts. Still, its strength was equal to a middle Houtian realm martial artist. Within the entire Sky Fortune Kingdom – if one didn't include the masters of the Seven Profound Martial House – it would be difficult for anyone to defeat this beast.

It had to be known that even the State Marshal Qin Xiao and the magnificent Mister Muyi had a cultivation at the middle Houtian realm. But as for Green Mulberry City, there were no Houtian masters stationed there.

“Lin Ming, be careful!” Lin Wanshan screamed from behind, as he watched Lin Ming rush in.

“Young Hero Lin, that is a fourth-level vicious beast! Wait for us brothers to come over and we will fight together with Young Hero Lin!” Shi Linkai was far away, but he immediately began to slash his way towards Lin Ming. If this python monster managed to reach the army, it would be able to sweep away the entire tower shield defensive line with a single swing of its tail. Once the defensive line was broken, the army's loss would be immeasurable; they would all be overwhelmed!

Now they could only rely on Lin Ming.

Lin Ming watched that python that was like a small hill, and his eyes narrowed. This vicious beast's strength was at the middle Houtian realm. At most, it would be equal to Huo Yanluo's level. To the current Lin Ming, instantly killing it was simple!

However, Lin Ming didn't want to reveal the hidden cards in his hands to the pair of eyes that was lurking within the bustling crowd.

Pu pu pu!

Lin Ming's spear swept out, making a killing circle. As all of the Corrupt Wolves around him were swept away, he aimed his spear and thrust towards the Scarlet Flood Python!

"Young Hero Lin, be careful!"

The martial artists of Green Mulberry City had no idea what the limit of Lin Ming's strength was. To them, the geniuses of the Seven Profound Valleys were too remote of an existence. Although they knew that Lin Ming was absurdly powerful, everyone still held their breath as they watched Lin Ming charge towards the Scarlet Flood Python alone with their own eyes.

Those grim eyes that were hiding in crowd locked onto Lin Ming. "A mere Scarlet Flood Python is absolutely not his match. Let's see just how much of his strength he uses."

This chess piece that Ouyang Boyan arranged to stay here originated from the Seven Profound Valleys, so he understood just how terrifying a direct disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys truly was. With his status, when he was young he simply didn't have a chance to fight against talents like Jiang Baoyun. He only understood the power of a direct disciple from rumors and watching these geniuses fight.

But during this Total Faction Martial Meeting, he had been forced to stay behind in Sky Fortune Kingdom, and hadn't seen the battle between Lin Ming and Jiang Baoyun. Because of this, he didn't have a personal concept of just how strong Lin Ming was, and had to personally judge him through watching him.

“Saaa!”

The Red Flood Python cried out with a grating scream, and its massive tail swung towards Lin Ming like whip.

Golden Roc Shattering the Void!

Lin Ming had deliberately suppressed the speed of Golden Roc Shattering the Void, but he still easily dodged the Scarlet Flood Python's strike.

Bang!

The python's broad tail smashed the ground, cracking the earth

and causing the battlefield to shake. Several unlucky Corrupt Wolves were crushed into bloody piles of goo!

As Shi Linkai saw this scene while rushing over, he felt chills run up his spine. A fourth-level vicious beast was truly a fearful existence. If he was struck by that tail, not even his bones would be left over. Not only that, but its attack speed was so quick. With his piddling movement techniques, he had no idea if he could dodge it...

A moment ago, Shi Linkai had shouted out that he would join forces with Lin Ming and kill the vicious beast, but now that he saw just how deadly it was, he wondered to himself: could he really help? He would probably die as collateral damage!

It was not just Shi Linkai, but the other martial artists were in a worse situation. Zhuang Fan and the other were mostly at the early Pulse Condensation period; their own individual strength were all less than Shi Linkai's. If they were even scratched by that Scarlet Flood Python's tail, they would probably die on the spot!

Besides Lin Ming, no one had the qualifications to tangle with the Scarlet Flood Python. Whoever came up would die!

Boom!

Boom!

The Scarlet Flood Python repeatedly smashed the ground with its

brutal tail. Lin Ming dodged using his superior movement. It looked like everywhere he went there was a danger that put him in a dead end, but every time he would just manage to barely dodge the Scarlet Flood Python's attack.

Lin Wanshan began to sweat from all pores. If Lin Ming mistimed a dodge even once, he would die!

Lin Ming was the Lin Family's future hope. If he died here then... not only would the Lin Family suffer an immeasurable loss, but they might not even be able to defend Green Mulberry City.

Lin Wanshan gulped. Right now he was incomparably nervous, but he was also completely helpless.

Dozens of massacred Corrupt Wolf corpses lay bloody and grotesque on the ground. None of the other Corrupt Wolves dared to approach, leaving a wide space that was several hundred feet wide for Lin Ming and the Scarlet Flood Python to fight. At this time, the entire beast tide stampede has slowed down.

"Not planning on using your trump cards?" The grim shadow in the crowd muttered to himself. He didn't even believe that there was the slightest chance that Lin Ming would be defeated. He only wondered how much Lin Ming would preserve his strength. After all, this beast tide had just begun, and there were bound to be more vicious beasts behind that were even fiercer.

Fwaaa!

The Scarlet Flood Python opened its gaping maw and suddenly spat out a large glob of venom. This human didn't even dare to fight it head-on, but was actually jumping all around; this caused the Scarlet Flood Python to be thoroughly enraged.

The glob of venom flew into the air and then scattered, falling like driving rain; it was undodgeable.

As Lin Ming was about to be enveloped by this storm of venom, he suddenly turned his spear. Purple arcs of lightning roared out!

Chi chi chi!

Under the clouded skies of the evening, the bright illumination of the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder's lightning arcs was even more dazzling!

All of the venom around Lin Ming was burnt away by the power of thunder, his entire body twined with purple lightning. With his spear, he thrust towards the Scarlet Flood Python.

Electric light sparked!

With the ashen clouds as his backdrop, Lin Ming was like a war god of thunder. The Scarlet Flood Python widened its jaws, biting towards Lin Ming!

Pa!

Lin Ming dodged the Scarlet Flood Python's fangs, thrusting his spear into the python's lower jaw. Then he stepped over the python's body, dragging his spear behind him, the spear tip embedded into the python, dragging a deep bloody crevice in its body. Flesh and blood flew into the sky.

This single spear strike had split the python from head to tail!

“Saa!”

The Scarlet Flood Python issued a horrifying scream, its hissing shriek breaking apart stone. Massive purple arcs of lightning wound around its body, and blood erupted like a waterfall from the giant fissure left behind by the spear, gushing out dozens of feet high!

Lin Ming's entire body was bathed in blood, and his hair tie had loosened during the attack. At this moment, he was like a demonic lord that crawled up from the Ashura Hell, infernal and unstoppable!

Seeing this distant one-sided great battle take place, the 10,000 soldiers were left speechless. This 200 foot long great python reached to the skies, its blood raining to the earth. This scene was too impactful on their minds.

He won?

Lin Wanshan was jumping in joy.

Lin Ming had actually won! He had cut down a fourth-level Scarlet Flood Python!

As soon as the Scarlet Flood Python died, the offensive charge of the Corrupt Wolves immediately died down. After a few more symbolic rushes, they began to retreat like an ebbing tide.

“The wolves are retreating!”

“We’ve defended!”

After withstanding the impacts of tens of thousands of Corrupt Wolves, the exhausted soldiers began to cheer. The archers still shot their arrows, but chasing them was impossible. The soldiers had reached the limits of their strength, and even if they were at top condition, it was impossible to chase a stampede of Corrupt Wolves over a long distance while wearing their heavy equipment.

Lin Ming carried his spear on his shoulder and walked back from the battlefield alone. During this battle, he had killed over a thousand Corrupt Wolves, while killing dozens of third-level vicious beasts and even the fourth-level Scarlet Flood Python. The combined efforts of all the other Pulse Condensation period martial artists didn’t even add up to half of this.

Of course, there was no simply no comparing them. Their strength and was not on the same level as Lin Ming’s.

“He finally used the power of thunder, but he didn’t use that thunder energy weapon of his...”

As the soldiers were returning, the figure in the shadows was mumbling to himself. Although he hadn’t seen Lin Ming when he had participated in the Total Faction Martial Meeting, he still had a great deal of information. Lin Ming’s trump card was not just his power of thunder, but also a needle-like weapon that was condensed from thunder energy. This weapon was Lin Ming’s true killing move.

“If I don’t factor in that needle-like thunder energy weapon, then what Lin Ming revealed so far should be his complete strength. He should be able to defeat an ordinary late Houtian realm master, which is actually the same cultivation as me. But, he still isn’t my match. If I want to kill him, I have to make sure it succeeds... otherwise, it will be too troublesome!”

The subordinate that Ouyang Boyan had left behind had a cultivation at the late Houtian realm. But he was still a disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys, and his combat strength was much more formidable than a normal late Houtian master.

The wolves receded, the casualties were tallied. More than 800 soldiers had sacrificed their lives and perished on the field.

After Lin Ming returned to Green Mulberry City, he went into seclusion and quickly began to mediate. The truth was his consumption of strength wasn’t too high. In addition to his already

formidable endurance, he had nearly his complete true essence reserves remaining afterwards. This seclusion was all an act of his.

To lure the snake from its hole and then kill it instead – this was Lin Ming's plan.

After the victory of the first battle, the morale of Green Mulberry City's garrison army had sharply risen. But now was not that time for celebrations. There was likely to be other groups of vicious beasts incoming, and they had to persist until reinforcements arrived.

Dinner was lavish. All of the major families had pooled together their resources, bringing good meat and other satisfying foods. There was enough for everyone.

Although the soldiers regretted that they could not drink, they still heartily ate their fill, taking water instead of wine.

At the banquet, the soldiers frantically talked about how Lin Ming had used a single spear to slaughter the Scarlet Flood Python in the chaos of the battlefield while being surrounded by tens of thousands of wolves. In the minds of an ordinary soldier, Lin Ming was simply a legend come to life.

“Old Lin, your Lin Family have truly produced a hero that will be recorded in history.” After dinner, Zhuang Fan spoke as he smoked from a pure gold pipe, walking over to Lin Wanshan's side. Out of all the major power players of Green Mulberry City, the Lin Family and Zhuang Family were closest because of their cooperation in

many fields of business.

“I didn’t think that our experience would be so shallow. The strength of a Seven Profound Valleys direct disciple can actually reach such a level.” As Lin Wanshan gazed off at the warm light within the tent that Lin Ming had retreated to, his mood was complex.

This gap was too amazing! He was unable to comprehend that a direct disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys who was only at the Pulse Condensation period was actually much stronger than the Houtian masters of Sky Fortune Kingdom!

“The frontier army set out two days ago, they should arrive in another seven or eight days. With Lin Ming, we should be able to defend until then. Today, the number of vicious beasts that Lin Ming killed were a tenth of the army’s total, but all of the high level vicious beasts were killed by him alone.”

Chapter 323 – Uninvited Guest

That night when Lin Ming went out, all of the soldiers who saw him would spontaneously stop and salute in respect.

Military men respected the strong. Because of Lin Ming's actions during the battle earlier, their damages had been greatly reduced.

“Young Hero Lin!”

A man wearing a wolf pelt walked up, a happy smile on his face. This man was the Salt Clan's Clan Leader, Shi Linkai.

“Clan Leader Shi.” Lin Ming had a favorable impression of this man. During the assault of the Corrupt Wolves, this man had followed closely behind him, fighting boldly and bravely. Except for Lin Ming himself, Shi Linkai had killed the most.

“Young Hero Lin is too kind, it's fine if you call me Old Shi.”

“What are the casualties in the army like?” Lin Ming was very concerned about the current state of the army. Without an army, it was impossible to block the beast tide; it was impossible for Lin Ming alone to stop a giant flood of vicious beasts no matter how strong he was. If they passed him, the beasts would be able to dash into Green Mulberry City. Green Mulberry City had 50 feet high city walls, but a high level vicious beast would be able to scale them in just a few hops.

Once that happened, it was useless no matter how many Lin Ming killed.

“We’ve lost more than 50 javelin throwers and archers, 300 long spear soldiers, 400 tower shield soldiers, and there are also many that are severely wounded and unable to fight. Altogether we’ve lost around 10% of our fighting force. There are also several brothers of my Salt Clan who have perished...”

As Shi Linkai spoke, he heard the screeching sound of a Heavenly Wind Eagle above the army camp. It was much more resounding and clear than a normal Heavenly Wind Eagle.

“Mm? Reinforcements?”

This was the first thought that popped into Lin Ming’s mind, but he immediately dismissed it. It had only been a day since he had been at the transmission relay station and sent news, it was impossible for reinforcements to arrive so quickly.

As soon as the two left the camp to see, they saw a giant Heavenly Wind Eagle that was four or five times larger than normal. Its wings shined like they were carved from gold.

Lin Ming had seen this sort of golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle before. It was a mount that the Peacock Mountain messenger had ridden. It had the bloodline of a Saint Beast, was exceedingly fast, and it could carry 10 times more than a normal Heavenly Wind Eagle.

Those who could ride this sort of golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle most likely came from a sect.

As the giant eagle swooped down, a buffet of wind directly blew away several army tents. The soldiers inside were also blown away, and landed on the ground with multiple bruises.

“F*ck! Who dares to be so arrogant!?” Shi Linkai was a straightforward man who was honest with his emotions. He thought that this was reinforcements, but now this person had not only come to their army camp without saying anything, but had also overturned many tents, injuring their soldiers. This grated on his nerves and caused his anger to rise.

“Junior-apprentice Sister, we’ve finally found an inhabited land. It’s really been hard for you these past four or five days. The savages that live in the Southern Wilderness are truly barbarians, there isn’t even a place to bathe.”

Atop the Heavenly Wind Eagle, a yellow-clothed youth around 25 or 26 with a sword on his back was speaking to a 18 or 19 year old girl.

As Lin Ming saw this yellow-clothed youth, he was stunned for a moment. This youth’s cultivation was already at the early Houtian realm. An early Houtian martial artist from a sect could still be considered somewhat skillful. Not only that, but he had broken through to the Houtian realm at a relatively young age. He should be at least a top inner court disciple, or maybe even a core disciple.

The girl that he had addressed as Junior-apprentice Sister was wearing an all-white dress. There was a faint crescent moon symbol embroidered on her dress, and she had the appearance of a beautiful and delicate woman.

Her eyes were expressionless as she scanned around where she had landed, silent. She didn't seem to have any desire to speak.

“Junior-apprentice Sister, the beast tide is everywhere now. We have no place to stay currently, so let's temporarily live here.”

“Mm...” The girl reluctantly said, then fell back into silence.

The yellow-clothed youth was delighted, he had finally persuaded his Junior-apprentice Sister. As long as he was able to live here for a while and catch his breath, he would be able to realize his wishes.

Before the yellow-clothed youth could say anything, an angry voice suddenly interrupted him. “Who the hell are you? You dare to rush into our army compound and injure our soldiers! And you still have the nerve to speak so casually in front of everyone! Where do think this is? Your home toilet? Come on!”

Shi Linkai was outraged; this yellow-clothed youth was simply pompous, like an arrogant young master.

With the sounds of weapons ringing, soldiers from all around drew their weapons. Dozens of arrows were readied, pulled to the

limit, the cold, metal-tipped arrows pointed straight towards the yellow-clothed youth. Several of the Salt Clan brothers also circled the yellow-clothed youth, all of them angry. If Shi Linkai hadn't waved them back, a fight would probably have broken out.

Although Shi Linkai was angry, he hadn't lost his rationality. He wasn't dumb; he had seen enough of the world to know that a golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle was extraordinary, and if this flying beast was able to create gusts of strong heavenly wind that could blow away several tents, then it probably came from a large sect.

It was most likely that this boy and girl also came from a large sect. These kinds of people were existences that Green Mulberry City could not afford to anger unless Lin Ming intervened. But as it stood, this was extremely troublesome for Lin Ming. After all, the other man's cultivation was at the early Houtian realm.

For a while, the atmosphere was tense. The white-clothed girl in the center still had an expressionless face, completely ignoring all the weapons that were pointed towards her.

The yellow-clothed youth gave cold humph, and shot a glare at the soldiers around him. His eyes were full of disdain; in his opinion, these people were nothing more than peasants.

"Who is your commanding officer? Bring him to me. You lot are unqualified to speak to me." The yellow-clothed youth didn't even bother with Shi Linkai. Shi Linkai's entire appearance indicated that he was someone from Jianghu, it was impossible for him to be a general.

“Who do you think you are?” Seeing that this yellow-clothed youth didn’t even place him in his eyes, Shi Linkai was incredibly angry. He wished he could just take out his saber and chop these two in half.

At this point, Green Mulberry City’s City Lord Zhao Yanming made his way out of the crowd. His expression was dark as he said, “I am Green Mulberry City’s City Lord, is there a matter I can assist you with?”

The boy and girl had a cultivation of the early Houtian realm and peak Pulse Condensation period, and they also came from a large sect. After seeing Lin Ming in action, Zhan Yanming had already been made aware of just how deeply terrifying the strength of a martial artist from a sect was. Even though that young girl looked fragile, maybe even all of the Pulse Condensation period martial artists in Green Mulberry City combined together couldn’t force her to use her true strength.

At that time, this boy and girl pair would slaughter them and just fly away on their Heavenly Wind Eagle, and they would be helpless to do anything. This was a scenario that Zhao Yanming didn’t want to see.

“You are the City Lord? What’s your name?” The yellow-clothed youth shot a look at Zhao Yanming, speaking in a haughty and imperious manner.

Zhou Yanming frowned. Without looking at Lin Ming, he sent

him a true essence sound transmission. “Young Hero Lin, just where are these two from?”

“I don’t know... maybe from some southern sect.” As Lin Ming glanced at the crescent moon symbols on their chest, he had a faint guess. Were they from the Moon Seizing Sect?

Moon Seizing Sect was located on the coast of the South Sea, and also bordered the Southern Wilderness along with the Seven Profound territory. It was very close to Divine Phoenix Island and the South Sea Demon Region. Their sect was relatively weak, so they had been the first to have a calamity fall upon them, and their entire sect was exterminated by the South Sea Demon Region.

Listening to their conversation, it seemed as if they had been traveling through the Southern Wilderness for several days. Moon Seizing Sect was also destroyed before the eruption of the beast tides. If these two were survivors of Moon Seizing Sect, then it would match, whether it was time or location.

“Then their strength compared to Young Hero Lin...” Zhao Yanming reasoned that Lin Ming wouldn’t be a match for these two. Lin Ming was only at the middle Pulse Condensation period, and they were all from a sect, so the difference couldn’t be that great.

But during the day, Lin Ming’s performance on the field was simply too awe-inspiring to everyone who watched. Zhao Yanming felt as if Lin Ming was nearly invincible, so that’s why he posed this question.

Lin Min didn't reply. It was difficult to say just how strong a Houtian master from a sect was. Not only that, but the situation in Green Mulberry City was very complex, and he didn't want to needlessly expose his true strength.

Zhao Yanming pushed down any anger and calmly said, "I am Zhao Yanming, who are you?"

"Zhao Yanming? Mm, listen up. You don't need to know who I am. I want you people to prepare a very good mansion and have the place tidied up. Switch out all the bedding and furniture, and send out seven or eight maids that are clean to take care of my Junior-apprentice Sister's daily living needs. My Junior-apprentice Sister is a vegetarian and loves to stay clean. Prepare a bath of spring water every day, and three meals of tender bamboo shoots and fruits. When the beast tide comes tomorrow, I'll help you out a bit."

As the yellow-clothed youth spoke such rampant words, Shi Linkai felt as if his lungs were about to explode from rage. He had never seen such an arrogant young man in his life before!

The truth was, Shi Linkai didn't know that the attitude of this yellow-clothed man was the near-universal attitude which most geniuses of sects treated common mortals with. To them, the common folk were nothing more than ants. For a human to speak to an ant on equal terms in a kind and reasonable manner was naturally impossible.

As for someone like Lin Ming, he had a humble origin and a reasonable temperament. Although his status had soared into the skies, his natural disposition had never changed because of that. Moreover, he was also from Green Mulberry City, and even when seeing Lin Wanshan he would greet him like any other family junior would.

But now that a normal genius from a sect had come, this genius would not even bother to look their way – the difference in status would just be too great.

“You really think you are all that? You think we don’t have masters here? You really think we need someone like you to ‘help out a bit’!?” Shi Linkai drew out the saber and began slashing the ground, cutting apart a stone block. If he wasn’t well aware that this yellow-clothed youth was dozens of times stronger than him, he would have already started a fight.

Hearing Shi Linkai’s insults, the yellow-clothed youth frowned. He narrowed his eyes and looked at Lin Ming who was standing near Shi Linkai. As his vision fell on Lin Ming, he said, “I see. I didn’t expect there to be a little talent here. So this is your so-called master. But do you think you are worthy of that title? As long as you...”

As the yellow-clothed man spoke, his lips curved up in a smile. He lifted his hands and formed sword fingers, then slashed out twice at Lin Ming. Sharp sword energy broke through the air, cutting towards Lin Ming.

“Mm?” Lin Ming’s expression sank. There were some hidden

enemies lurking in the shadows, so he didn't want to cause any trouble. But now he had actually been rolled together into this mess.

Chapter 324 – The Girl in White

Chi! Chi!

The two sword energies shot out from right and left at extremely tricky angles. Although they were only casual strikes, they were still strikes that came from a sect-based Houtian master. If a normal middle Pulse Condensation martial artist was struck by these two sword energies, they would be severely injured.

The yellow-clothed man thought to establish his reputation to avoid future troubles. And the best way to establish that reputation was naturally to slap down Green Mulberry City's current number one master, Lin Ming.

“You don't even make sense!”

Lin Ming coldly snorted. He had been dragged into this mess for no reason and this random man had actually attacked him out of the blue. Obviously, there was something wrong with his mind.

Azure light flashed, and Lin Ming punched out twice, meeting these two sword finger energies with his fists.

Bang! Bang!

With the sound of an explosion, the two sword energies were broken apart. Lin Ming hadn't even been touched, nor had he taken a single step back.

“Oh?” The yellow-clothed youth’s eyebrows slanted up. “A little boy at the Pulse Condensation period can actually block my sword finger attack? You’re quite a character aren’t you? Hehe, how about if I use 30% of my strength!”

The yellow-clothed character was about to strike out once again, but then he saw that the white-clothed girl was waving her hand at him, interrupting him. “Senior-apprentice Brother, stop it. Don’t try to oppress other people with your power like this.”

The yellow-clothed youth’s cultivation was at the early Houtian realm, but Lin Ming was actually only at the middle Pulse Condensation period. This sort of fight was originally unfair; the yellow-clothed man was simply using his age and cultivation to suppress others. In the opinion of geniuses, even if the yellow-clothed youth won, it still wouldn’t be a victory.

The yellow-clothed was a bit unhappy being stopped by the white-clothed girl, but he still understood the meaning behind her words and went along with her request, “Since Junior-apprentice Sister says so, I’ll forget it. You, boy, today is your lucky day.”

“Oh? I’m lucky?” Lin Ming thought this was hilarious. In that brief tussle a moment ago, that yellow-clothed youth really did only use a small portion of his strength, but Lin Ming had an extremely keen perception, and he was able to feel that the purity of the yellow-clothed youth’s true essence. He thought that this yellow-clothed youth might be a core disciple, but now it seemed more likely that he was the a high ranking inner court disciple.

An inner court disciple was simply nothing. Currently, Qin Xingxuan was already an inner court disciple, and once her talent blossomed in the future, she would most likely become a core disciple.

“What, you aren’t convinced?” The yellow-clothed youth’s eyebrows picked up, “Since my Junior-apprentice Sister has spoken of compassion, today I will not bully the young. If you aren’t convinced, there is a simple solution. When the beast tide attacks tomorrow, you and I will both go out, and we’ll see just who kills the most. How about it?”

Lin Ming hadn’t even spoken when Shi Linkai angrily shouted, “What dog fart nonsense! Like this father needs your help! My Green Mulberry City...”

Shi Linkai had finished, his voice still full of indignant anger, when a loud voice suddenly interrupted him, “Clan Leader Shi, please take note of the current situation and consider the greater good. Green Mulberry City’s decisions will be determined by Green Mulberry City’s people.”

Shi Linkai turned to look, and saw that the person speaking was the garrison army commander, Zhu Ping. He was wearing a military uniform, and seemed to be emitting a little aura of irritation.

Shi Linkai’s heart began to blaze with fury. Only Green Mulberry City’s people can determine Green Mulberry City’s decisions? Were the Salt Clan not people from Green Mulberry City? His brothers had died in order to protect this city, and yet they actually

had such a foul reputation?

Shi Linkai's fury was about to spill over and cause an irreversible scene when at that moment, Lin Ming sent him a true essence sound transmission, "Clan Leader Shi, don't bother with this trivial matter, stop here for now."

Before luring out the chess piece that Ouyang Boyan had lain down, Lin Ming didn't want to stir up a needless fight, thus exposing his own strength.

Lin Ming was a hero that Shi Linkai held a great deal of admiration towards. Shi Linkai had no choice but to back down, icily coughing as he stopped speaking.

Zhu Ping turned a smile on the yellow-clothed youth and said, "I will immediately empty the best mansion in Green Mulberry City, change the bedding and furniture, and have several well trained maids brought over. Two masters, please rest freely.

Zhu Ping bowed as he spoke. Such a welcome that was in agreement with all the specifications seemed like a deliberate attempt to nauseate Lin Ming.

Lin Ming lived in the army compound, ate with the soldiers and lived with the soldiers. Yet Zhu Ping had actually set aside a special residence for these two people.

In this regard, Lin Ming didn't mind. Some people were like this.

If you treated them kindly, that person might not take you seriously. But if you pushed their face into the ground and slapped them around, they would think of you as a true character that couldn't be offended, and treat you carefully and respectfully.

This kind of person could only be described as shallow and cheap.

Of course, the difference with which Zhu Ping treated Lin Ming and the yellow-clothed youth was also because of hatred and other factors.

Zhu Ping was very glad to see that the yellow-clothed youth and Lin Ming seemed hostile to each other. If these two could fight, and Lin Ming receive a severe injury in the process, killing him would be much easier.

“Hmph, I can tell you're a sensible one. Hurry up and prepare. Remember to prepare several buckets of spring bath water, and incense to clear the smell. My Junior-sister does not like to live in places like this army compound. Rest assured, once the beast tide comes, I'll be able to arrive in just a few breaths of time.” As the yellow-clothed youth spoke, he glanced at Lin Ming, an unforgiving expression etched on his face. As for his strike being resisted a moment ago, he naturally wasn't comfortable with this. It was just that he didn't want to go against the wishes of the white-clothed girl.

The yellow-clothed youth and his junior-apprentice sister were truly disciples from the Moon Seizing Sect. The Moon Seizing Sect had been destroyed six days go, and over 90% of the disciples had died. Of the Xiantian masters, all of them had perished.

Luckily, the two of them had managed to escape. They had been traveling under the barest conditions, spending most of their time in the jungles of the Southern Wilderness. They lived outdoors, ate wild fruits and dried rations, and didn't even have the chance to change clothes. For the white-clothed girl who was used to remaining clean, this was very difficult to endure.

The yellow-clothed youth had seized the opportunity to drop the white-clothed girl in this big mortal city, and rest for a few days.

The truth was, he also had his own reason for doing so. This white-clothed girl was actually one of direct disciples of the Moon Seizing Sect. If she was able to escape this time, that meant there must definitely be many treasures on her body. Her own master had died beside her, how could she not have given her disciple everything?

Earth-steps treasures, rare jade slips, and most important of all... Heaven Opening Pills!

The yellow-clothed youth estimated that this white-clothed girl might have five or six Heaven Opening Pills on her!

Although the Moon Seizing Sect was one of the lowest ranked within the 19 third-grade sects, they had still managed to accumulate several dozens of Heaven Opening Pills. Since the white-clothed girl was one of the top ranked direct disciples in the sect, there was a high possibility she would have many Heaven Opening Pills on her!

Besides the Heaven Opening Pill, the yellow-clothed youth was faintly aware that within the Moon Seizing Sect, there also existed a top-ranked extremely valuable medicine. This medicine's value was far beyond that of a Heaven Opening Pill, and it was said to be related to the former master of the South Sea Demon Region... the master of Silent Demon Emperor City.

Although the Moon Seizing Sect had been on the decline for a long time, it still had a very long and storied sect history, filled with glory and tribulations. 2000 years ago, the Moon Seizing Sect was a top third-grade sect, and its strength surpassed even Peacock Mountain.

At that time, the Moon Seizing Sect had joined forces with the entire South Horizon Region to lay siege to Silent Demon Emperor City. Obtaining such extremely rare and top grade medicine from this siege wouldn't be unusual.

Silent Demon Emperor City used to be a Holy Land rank sect, and the Netherworld Great Emperor was a top figure of the entire Skill Spill Continent. From an existence like that, whatever came from their hand – even if it were a chamber pot – would be a rare and precious artifact that countless small sects would crazily fight over.

The precious medicine that existed within the Moon Seizing Sect was said to have a very high and impactful effect for Xiantian masters that were trying to break into the Revolving Core realm. As for what it specifically was, the yellow-clothed youth had only ever heard some vague rumors. It had been so many years since then, so it might all be gone.

Of course, the yellow-clothed youth didn't expect that the white-clothed girl would have such a precious medicine on her body. Even if she did, he wouldn't be able to swallow a medicine of that level.

His heart's true desire lay in the Heaven Opening Pills. With his talent, it would not be easy to reach the Xiantian realm. But if he had enough Heaven Opening Pills, it wouldn't be a problem.

Who didn't wish to reach the Xiantian realm?

If the white-clothed girl was not an angelic beauty and didn't have countless life-saving measures, this yellow-clothed youth would have already directly snatched it from her body.

The yellow-clothed youth had originally been an inner court disciple of the Moon Seizing Sect, and the disparity between his status and the white-clothed girl's status was immense. In normal times, if these two people met, the yellow-clothed youth would have had to be extremely respectful to her. However, in his heart, he had many unnatural and perverted ambitions towards the white-clothed girl. It wasn't just him, but many of the other male disciples of the Moon Seizing Sect had once dreamed of marrying this white-clothed girl. Once they did, they would be able to obtain extra resources and have the backing of such a beautiful lady. Wouldn't that simply be perfection?

Of course, the yellow-clothed youth had only ever thought that – it was simply impossible for it to happen.

In particular, just a month ago the white-clothed girl had been chosen as one of the geniuses in the training program carried out by Divine Phoenix Island. She had been one of the 50 human-step talents that were selected.

The Moon Seizing Sect had originally been one of the lowest 19 third-grade sects. When the joint talent training program had first been announced at the Seven Profound Valleys, no one from the Moon Seizing Sect was included in the 20 invited elites. Afterwards, the total joint talent training program had over 100 individuals, and the Moon Seizing Sect merely had a pitiful two disciples chosen.

One was a male disciple, and the other was this white-clothed girl.

Therefore, that male disciple and the white-clothed girl had become the dragon and phoenix pairing of the Moon Seizing Sect. In these circumstances, anyone that had improper thoughts of the white-clothed girl were the same as toads trying to eat swan meat.

The yellow-clothed youth had burned with jealousy. He wished he could kill that lucky fool of a male disciple, take his place, and then obtain the white-clothed girl. He wanted to tear apart her impassionate shell and mercilessly ravage her.

This was probably a common dark and frustrated thought that many of the inner court male disciples in the sect had.

And then, tragedy had befallen the Moon Seizing Sect, and that too-lucky male disciple had actually died. Just this point had caused the yellow-clothed youth to feel immeasurably happy.

The yellow-clothed youth felt as if he were in a dream he didn't want to wake from. As he was fleeing, he met the white-clothed girl who was riding away on a golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle.

This was simply the heavens themselves helping him.

Because the white-clothed girl had lost her master and lost her sect, she must be in immeasurable pain and inner turmoil. For the yellow-clothed youth, this was a golden chance to seize her heart and everything else.

Therefore, for these past days, the yellow-clothed youth had been using all of the experience and knowledge he had of flirting with girls to take advantage of the white-clothed girl's vulnerable state of mind, and leave a favorable impression and goodwill on her.

If there was any disciple within the Moon Seizing Sect that wanted to thank the South Sea Demon Region even after they destroyed their sect, then it would probably only be this yellow-clothed youth.

Chapter 325 – Beast Tide’s Night Attack

The white-clothed girl had originally intended to travel to White Peak Sect. The White Peak Sect had a very good relationship with the Moon Seizing Sect, she believed she would be able to take refuge there.

However, the yellow-clothed youth didn’t want that to happen. Once the white-clothed girl entered White Peak Sect, she would inevitably become a genius of the White Peak Sect. As for him, he would still remain a nobody. When that happened, where would he have another chance to obtain this white-clothed girl?

Therefore he had hinted to her that the White Peak Sect would covet their cultivation methods, legacies, inheritances, pills, resources, and had also listed out various possible dangers that could befall her. Finally, his suggestions began to slowly sway the white-clothed girl. In conclusion, the white-clothed girl was only 18 years old. To suddenly suffer such a sudden blow to her psyche, it was inevitable that she would be confused and muddled for a while.

So the yellow-clothed youth had flown through the Southern Wilderness with the white-clothed girl and had finally arrived at Green Mulberry City. He was quite satisfied with the size of Green Mulberry City, and was planning to stay there and enjoy the comfortable environment. Meanwhile, he would take care of the white-clothed girl who needed to be comforted, and finally move onto her, savaging her without a thought.

As they say, cooked rice cannot be uncooked.

As the white-clothed girl bathed, the yellow-clothed youth listened from outside. He had very good senses, and could clearly hear the splashing sounds of water, and also the sounds of the several maids cleaning up the white-clothed girl.

As he heard these sounds, his heart began to itch. He was thinking about just how to find an excuse to stay in her room tonight, when at that moment, a loud alarm began to ring throughout the city.

The beast tide had come again!

The yellow-clothed youth cursed. The fall of Green Mulberry City didn't have any relation to him. But once the beast tide crashed in, they would reach this place sooner or later – it was pointless staying in the room.

.....

Night. The moon was bright and round in the inky sky. Standing above the city walls, one could see a distant dark mass of vicious beasts stampeding over. Most of these vicious beasts were first-level or second-level vicious beasts, with a small number of third-level vicious beasts. There were even more than during the daytime attack; there were probably no less than 100,000.

The white-clothed girl had just put on a pure white dress. This was a special dress that Zhu Ping had prepared, it was made from snow silk. It was extremely comfortable and fit well.

“I apologize for disturbing your rest.” Zhu Ping said as he approached them, all smiles.

“I’ll only help this one time.” The yellow-clothed youth said with a dour expression. He was only borrowing this city to stay for a few days. Helping them out once was already a great gift.

“One time is enough. Two masters may feel relieved. After several more days pass, reinforcements will arrive.” After Zhu Ping froze for a moment, he could only go along with the yellow-clothed youth’s words.

“That had best be so. I do not wish to be disturbed again!”

As the yellow-clothed youth spoke, he slowly extracted a longsword from his spatial ring. At this time, he suddenly found Lin Ming not too far away. He laughed and said, “Boy, would you like to have a little race? Let’s see who kills more. If you can even kill half of my number, then you win!”

The yellow-clothed youth’s eyes flashed. He had to take advantage of the time when his strength was still above his junior-apprentice sister’s, and display his strength in order to win her heart. Of course, to demonstrate his combat prowess, he had to have a foil. And Lin Ming just managed to qualify to be this foil.

If he was just killing vicious beasts by himself, then that would be meaningless.

“Not interested.” Lin Ming replied, not even bothering to return a look. He flicked the Purple Comet Spear in his hands and then jumped out of the army compound.

The yellow-clothed youth frowned. This kid was just too reckless!

Zhu Ping looked at Lin Ming’s rushing form and the corners of his mouth curved in a hint of a smile. At this moment, he heard a muffled true essence sound transmission in his ears, “Are you sure that boy sent his Winged Flood Dragon to another city to request help?”

“Mm, I’m sure. I ask Sir to look for an opportunity as soon as possible. Once the reinforcements arrive, I’m afraid there won’t be another good chance.” Zhu Ping suggested. If Lin Ming didn’t die, it would be difficult for the Zhu Family to survive.

“You do not need to say anything, I already know where things stand.” The man that was hidden in the crowd gave a cold snort, his lips curving in a smile full of murderous intent. Without the Winged Flood Dragon, he believed he had a 70 to 80% chance of killing Lin Ming.

Roar!

Roar!

Roar!

In the front, the vicious beasts finally reached the trap line. These traps had played a great role during the days beast tide attack, but there had only been time to reset less than half of them. A few hundred scattered vicious beasts stepped on the traps, tumbling to the ground and being trampled to death by the vicious beast army behind them.

The yellow-clothed youth from the Moon Seizing Sect strolled towards the vicious beast tide, grasped his longsword, and casually sliced out.

Ka!

A blue ripple that was visible to the naked eye spread out like a crescent moon, its range reaching dozens of feet away. A large tract of land was chopped apart, and the demonic beasts in front were cut down. Dozens of first-level and second-level vicious beasts that were behind were also cut into two by the sword energy.

“Sword Energy Transverse!”

The yellow-clothed youth followed with a turn of his sword. Sword energy flushed out, twisting into large snake-shapes that reached into the sky, and then fell from the clouds like scattered flowers from celestial beauties. Wherever these dozens of sword energies visited, blood would fly.

“So fierce!”

Shi Linkai was watching from not too far away. As he saw this yellow-clothed youth slash out and instantly kill over a hundred vicious beasts in just two moves, he was shocked. This youth was so strong!

This kind of strength might even be superior to that late Houtian hermit master within Sky Fortune Kingdom.

Shi Linkai had to admit that this yellow-clothed youth was incomparably arrogant, but he had the ability to be arrogant. Even if several dozen of him fought this yellow-clothed man, it would just be a slaughter.

Not too far away from Shi Linkai, Zhuang Fan and Lin Wanshan were also bewildered. There truly was no limit in the universe, there was always someone higher. The heritage of a large sect was beyond their imagination.

For a time, the yellow-clothed youth was the star of the scene. Even the white-clothed girl had a faint smile on her face. Of course, the reason wasn't the yellow-clothed youth's strength. With his ability, he was nowhere near a true genius Houtian master of the Moon Seizing Sect. The reason she smiled was because after several days of fleeing, she had finally arrived at this mortal city and was able to relax.

Seeing so many simple people of this mortal world, she suddenly felt that perhaps listening to the yellow-clothed youth and living in

the mortal world wasn't so bad after all. Although her cultivation would be slow, she would be able to live a peaceful and easy life. She wouldn't be tired all the time or nerve-wracked.

Heaps of dismembered beast corpses lay around the yellow-clothed youth. None of the vicious beasts dared to go forward against that formidable sword energy.

In comparison to the yellow-clothed youth, Lin Ming seemed much more ordinary. There were only a few dozen beast corpses around him; the number was a third of the yellow-clothed youth.

“This is too terrifying, that yellow-clothed youth can actually kill vicious beasts three or four times faster than Hero Lin!”

“It only takes a single move to kill a few dozen vicious beasts, and he also uses a sword. Who said that swords were bad against big groups? That sword in the yellow-clothed youth's hand seems fiercer than Hero Lin's spear!

“Eh, I don't want to admit it... but... he really is a bit fiercer...”

“Bah! What nonsense are you speaking? How old is Hero Lin? How old is that man? Can the two even be compared?”

It was unknown who said that, but afterwards, everyone seemed to wake up. Lin Ming was only 16 years old, but that yellow-clothed youth was in his twenties!

The soldiers present were from Green Mulberry City, so they were naturally biased towards Lin Ming. “That’s right, after a few more years when our Green Mulberry City’s Hero Lin grows up, he’ll also reach this degree of power.”

At this moment, there was a shattering roar in the beast tide. Fourth-level vicious beasts had appeared, and there were two of them!

The two were Iron-armor Lizards. One was big, and one was a bit smaller. These Iron-armored Lizards were mighty, and their defensive power was extremely strong. If one couldn’t kill them, they would break through the city walls sooner or later.

“There’s two of them, one for each of us!” The yellow-clothed youth capriciously smiled. He waved his sword, and then rushed straight towards the lizards.

In his opinion, with Lin Ming’s strength, it wasn’t impossible for him to kill those Iron-armor Lizards. But to do so in a massive herd of vicious beasts would be difficult; he’d probably barely accomplish it with a great deal of effort. All of this was perfect to embarrass Lin Ming.

Cha cha cha!

Sword light fell like rain, and every one pierced bloody holes in the Iron-armor Lizard’s body. The Iron-armor Lizard tilted its heads upwards, hissing towards the sky.

After having used a single sword to severely wound the Iron-armor Lizard, the yellow-clothed youth was very satisfied with his success. He thought that if he were in Lin Ming's position, he would try to attack the smaller lizard. But as he turned his head to look, he actually saw that Lin Ming had dove into the vast beast tide, killing more the deeper he went.

The yellow-clothed youth smiled with disdain. What a coward. He didn't even dare to kill the small one. Oh well, he alone was enough to kill both!

As he thought of the junior-apprentice sister watching him from behind, the yellow-clothed youth surged with fighting spirit. He turned around and slashed out a martial skill towards the second Iron-armor Lizard, severely wounding it!

In two swords strikes, he had caused two Iron-armor Lizards to suffer heavy wounds. In the eyes of an ordinary soldier, he was simply a god of war that landed in the mortal world!

Even Shi Linkai willingly shut his mouth. Within the Sky Spill Continent, powerhouses were those that earned the respect of the world. The yellow-clothed youth was so much stronger than Shi Linkai, that let alone look down on him, even if he were beat into a pulp he would still recognize this power.

At this time, the more Lin Ming killed, the deeper he went. Although the moonlight was bright, it was still night. Quickly, Lin Ming was submerged in that endlessly vast stampede of vicious beasts.

“Lin Ming! Don’t go that far! Come back!” Within the army, the one who most worried about Lin Ming was Lin Wanshan. If something happened to Lin Ming, that would be a loss the Lin Family could not withstand.

“Mm? Lin Ming?” In the army compound, the white-clothed girl heard the name ‘Lin Ming’, and she reflexively froze for a moment, then shook her head. There was no way it was that person. Lin Ming, Lin anything, was a relatively common name. It wasn’t strange for someone to share the same name.

The white-clothed girl restored her indifferent look. Standing in the windy night, she didn’t bother to do anything. In this conflict between mortals and weak vicious beasts, she disdained to bother with it.

Lin Ming killed his way in deeper and deeper. His killing speed was extremely quick. Wherever he went, a death and blood would follow. It was as if he were drawing a crimson line upon the battlefield.

‘In the end, he’s just a little boy. Although he has amazing talent, he’s not mature. He finally felt how terrifying the weight of being suppressed is. If he stayed near the yellow-clothed youth he would just lose face, so he decided to rush in too deep.’ Behind Lin Ming, a blurry shadow followed, hidden within the tide of vicious beasts.

Lin Ming kept fighting. Where his spear went, blood followed. ‘You finally came out? What a clever concealment technique. Even

though you're so close, I only feel a faint murderous intent.'

Chapter 326 – Assassin

With Lin Ming's strength, rushing full speed into the groups of vicious beast was no different to a saber slicing into soft silk, matchless and unstoppable. In an instant, he had broken more than ten miles deep. There, he was close to the edge of the vicious beast horde.

The blurry shadow that followed behind Lin Ming was suspicious, 'Why is he in so deep? Did he discover me?'

This blurry shadow had thought that Lin Ming was galvanized by the killing speed of the yellow-clothed youth, and didn't have the face to stay near his side, thus he had rushed into the beast tide. But in a single breath, he rushed all the way to the edge of the beast horde – he was just too deep.

'This boy, is he trying to force me out?' The shadow's complexion sank as he thought this.

'He doesn't know how deep my strength is and yet dares to lead me out? He wants to turn the tables and kill me? This boy is truly confident to the point of being arrogant, does he think he is invincible under the heavens!?'

This blurry shadow didn't have full assurance that he would be able to assassinate Lin Ming. After all, Lin Ming was a heaven defying talent that even Divine Phoenix Island was concerned about. Before, he wouldn't have been surprised if he was hiding his strength or some life-saving trump card, but he never thought that

Lin Ming would have the ability to kill him.

He was an official faction disciple, his cultivation was at the late Houtian period and he had a solid foundation. How could he possibly be killed by Lin Ming, a little boy at the middle Pulse Condensation period? Not even mentioning Lin Ming, he didn't even place that foppish yellow-clothed youth from the Moon Seizing Sect in his eyes.

Considering all aspects, even if he couldn't defeat Lin Ming, he could still safely retreat. After all, he was still a late Houtian martial artist from a sect. If he used his full force to escape, it would be difficult to stop him, much less kill him.

Although he didn't have a complete grasp on killing Lin Ming, currently he had to act. Otherwise, if reinforcements came to Green Mulberry City, he wouldn't have this chance again. His own life was tied together with Ouyang Boyan. When Lin Ming grew to the point that he was able to disregard the rules of the Seven Profound Valleys, that would be the day he died.

“Die!”

The blurry shadow suddenly accelerated, all of his murderous intent converged onto himself. His entire body shimmered with a dim black illusory light as if he were melting in the air, his body hidden in the void.

“Heart Piercing Blade!”

His sword light was nearly completely hidden in the dark of night. Using the massacre of vicious beasts as cover, he thrust towards Lin Ming's heart!

“You're finally here!”

Lin Ming sneered. He wasn't afraid of thieves, only thieves that lurked in the shadows. As long as they came out, he had nothing to fear.

True essence revolved within his entire body. Lin Ming's spear turned around, lightning flashed, true essence rushed forth, his spear thrust forwards!

“Returning Spear!”

This was one of the basic moves found within the simple Foundation Spear Technique. However, under the enhancement of the azure true essence and power of thunder, the spear's strength had reached an incomparably terrifying level.

Kacha!

The black sword energy was twisted to pieces; Lin Ming's spear thrust forth, piercing the shadow's throat!

“Mm? Afterimage? No... it's an illusion!”

In that split-second, it was too late for Lin Ming to retract his spear. Wind howled as a sharp sword stabbed from a blind angle, thrusting towards the left side of Lin Ming's ribcage, wanting to pierce his heart!

Power of thunder!

Bang!

With an explosive eruption, the coiling dragon steel needle hiding within Lin Ming broke free. Countless arcs of lightning twisted within the air, writhing like snakes. The shadow gave a stuffy cough, then rapidly drew back.

But Lin Ming also felt pain in his ribs. His clothes had been torn, and a shallow bloodstain appeared under the left side of his ribcage.

The coiling dragon steel needle that was fused into his body could be used to defend against close-range attacks. This was a move that he had once used to deal with Jiang Baoyun, and had relied on it to stop Jiang Baoyun's peerless speed.

"You finally came out." Lin Ming casually swiped away the bloodstain; there was only a tiny inch-long wound left over.

This assassin was an old man. He was tall and stooped down, his face covered with a black mask. He held an extremely thin soft sword in his hand that was only two feet long. This sort of sword

was best suited for assassinations. Two feet was enough to reach the heart from any angle, and this thin and short sword was also easy to hide.

As this old man looked at Lin Ming, he could hardly believe that his sword strike hadn't wounded Lin Ming more. His expression sank. Although he couldn't land a solid attack because of the power of thunder, it still shouldn't have caused so little damage. Did Lin Ming have some special method to increase his defense?

"You are Ouyang Boyan's henchman?" Lin Ming tranquilly asked, his eyebrows curved up in a question.

"Hehe, you do not need to twist around words. Between you and me, we have no past injustice nor any current enmity. I only came to kill you because of money. I came here to send you to the netherworld, but do not blame me..." As the old man spoke, his voice was extremely hoarse, and the mask on his face shook. If one looked closely, they could even see the thin edges of this man's face under the mask; he was no different than a skeleton.

Lin Ming suddenly smiled, "The mask you use as a prop in this act is also quite good."

The old looking man's expression sank, "What do you mean?"

"Haha, Martial House Master Bi, even now you still pretend and try to hide. With your ability, why do you need a mask? Just take it off. I've already experienced your appearance changing technique before, and was deceived quite miserably by you. You think that

you can fool me again with the same method?”

Lin Ming thought that the one lurking in the shadows was an apprentice of Ouyang Boyan. After all, this sort of matter could only be entrusted to an apprentice; otherwise, Ouyang Boyan would never feel secure.

Since Ouyang Boyan was an Acacia Faction disciple, his apprentice should also be an Acacia Faction disciple. But why was this person so good at concealment techniques? This ability should only belong to a disciple from the Mirage Faction.

And the only Mirage Faction disciple who held a grudge against Lin Ming, and whose cultivation was at the Houtian realm, was Bi Luo!

Only Bi Luo could have planned this with Ouyang Boyan. The two must have totally cooperated, planning on assassinating him.

Lin Ming remembered that originally, Bi Luo's cultivation was at the peak of the middle Houtian realm. But now he had broken through to the late Houtian realm. It might have been because of some help given to him by Ouyang Boyan.

Of course, these were only his guesses. Bi Luo's appearance changing technique was not something that Lin Ming could see through, so he was putting forth a front towards Bi Luo.

The old man was expressionless. He coldly said, “I have no idea

what you are saying. Delaying for time is useless. You are not my match, and today you will die without a doubt.”

“Oh? You think you can?” As Lin Ming spoke he excitedly smacked his lips, his eyes full of fighting spirit.

After Lin Ming’s cultivation had broken through to the middle Pulse Condensation period and he had obtained the Purple Comet Spear and Earthcore Crimson Flame, his strength had increased by a great deal. Now he was hoping to find a good match to assess and confirm his own strength. Before, the yellow-clothed youth who was barking in front of him could not arouse the least bit of interest from Lin Ming.

But Bi Luo was a great choice.

“It is good for the young to be arrogant, but to be too arrogant is the same as being an idiot! Die!”

Xiu!

The old man moved and his body shifted, a gray light shining out from him. Every time this gray light shot out, another one of him appeared.

In an instant, there were 36 clones behind the old man.

This was fast to the degree that a normal martial artist would not be able to see it. It would only leave behind an extremely brief

flash on the visual field of the iris; this was the afterimage.

But, Lin Ming's perception was surpassingly keen. It was impossible for this old man to create 36 afterimages, thus, that meant that this old man before him hadn't released afterimages, but illusions.

This was also a Mirage Faction cultivation method!

Lin Ming smiled, "You hid your appearance, but you can't hide your cultivation method. What you just used was a cultivation method of the Mirage Faction."

"What is a Mirage Faction cultivation method? Once you go to the netherworld, I'd love to see how you keep guessing!"

At the same time, the 36 old men flicked the swords in their hands; 36 sword lights flashed!

"36 Swords Absolute Killing Array!"

Cha cha cha cha cha cha!

36 sharp beams of light pierced towards Lin Ming from all directions, causing the air to tremble. The thick true essence was at least 10 times better than that of the yellow-clothed youth from the Moon Seizing Sect!

The old man had suddenly used his killing blow. Since things reached this point, Lin Ming naturally didn't need to hide his strength any longer. True essence flushed into the Heretical God Seed.

Heretical God Force – open!

Bang!!!

Compressed azure true essence rushed out of the Heretical God Seed like a tidal wave. The 36 white lights were completely caught within the surging azure true essence waves, and were drowned out by the endless power of the True Dragon!

“What!?”

The old man's complexion immediately changed. The power of the 36 Swords Absolute Killing Array was in the top three of all the skills he knew. Yet it was so easily blocked by Lin Ming.

He had guessed correctly: Lin Ming had been hiding part of his strength. But he never imagined that Lin Ming would be so strong. If Lin Ming was depending on some sort of special item or incomparably exquisite cultivation method to avoid him, the old man wouldn't have been surprised. But a moment ago, Lin Ming had extinguished all of his sword energies in a full frontal collision!

In a frontal impact, what mattered was how thick one's true essence was. But whether or not true essence was thick depended

mostly on one's cultivation. How could a late Houtian realm master's true essence be suppressed by a neophyte at the middle Pulse Condensation period?

How!?

Lin Ming grinned. Since he had opened the Heretical God Force, he planned to bring this battle to a quick conclusion. "Martial House Master Bi, it's quite regrettable that neither you nor Ouyang Boyan had gone to the Total Faction Martial Meeting. Hearing rumors is always inferior to seeing with your own eyes. Martial House Master Bi has made the wrong judgement, and for that reason you will pay the deep price!"

"Humph! What nonsense!" The old man was not intimidated. He would overdraw his true essence and use the even stronger 72 Swords Absolute Killing Array, and definitely be able to kill Lin Ming in a single blow. But at this moment his complexion suddenly changed, because above Lin Ming's speartip, a red wisp of flame and a small purple steel needle appeared.

In the vast night sky, the two tiny lights seemed insignificant. But the old man's eyes suddenly widened, almost rolling back into his head.

'This... this is...'

'Impossible! It's impossible! It cannot be a Flame Essence!'

The old man paled. He almost couldn't believe his own judgement, but he felt a terrifying power of fire within that small red flame.

“Impossible, no, this can't be... a thunder and fire dual-attribute body. A mere 16 year old can control a powerful thunder energy weapon, but can also control a Flame Essence; there probably isn't a single person like that in the entire mainland.

The old man seemed to be in a trance, muttering to himself as his mouth twitched.

“You think that it's a thunder energy weapon?” Lin Ming smiled, extending out his hand. The coiling dragon steel needle immediately jumped into his palm, turning around and around. “Martial House Master Bi, please open your eyes and take a careful look. This is an instrument condensed from pure thunder energy.”

Chapter 327 – You Cannot Stop Me

Brutal and manic power of thunder scattered out.

A two inch long simple steel needle. There was a textured image of a Purple Flood Dragon carved onto the surface, twining around the needle a total of nine times.

Because the coiling dragon steel needle was in a completely static state, the power of thunder was fully restrained within it. The old man had plenty of time to observe the energy structure of the steel needle, and his perception wasn't bounced back either.

As he felt the power of thunder that was compressed to such a terrifying degree, the old man's lips began to fiercely twitch.

“This... this is...”

The old man had never personally seen a Thunder Soul before, but as a Mirage Faction disciple, he knew that the enemy that was best suited to suppress them were thunder-attribute martial artists. The power of thunder was able to dispel illusions, ghosts, and evil powers. This was something that the old man had learned from reading many ancient texts.

This steel needle in front of him didn't send out even the slightest bit of power of thunder at the moment. It was endless, and all of the threads of thunder seemed to contain a consciousness; it was alive.

Consciousness... awareness... thunder with life, endless; this was the symbol of a Thunder Soul!

Compared to a Flame Essence, a Thunder Soul was much more rare. Even a low-grade human-step Thunder Soul was an incomparably precious treasure. As for a medium-grade human-step Thunder Soul, that was enough to cause bloodbaths between Xiantian masters...

Seeing the intensity of the terrifying energy within Lin Ming's hand, this Thunder Soul was absolutely at least a medium-grade human-step Thunder Soul... could it even be a high-grade human-step Thunder Soul?!?

The old man was unable to imagine that this was a Pulse Condensation period martial artist. Where or how could he have possibly absorbed a high-grade human-step Thunder Soul which only a Xiantian master could absorb?

Even if it were Divine Phoenix Island, they also wouldn't be able to achieve this. To absorb a Thunder Soul, one could only have limited assistance – the true test all depended on oneself.

Not just that, but the boy had a Thunder Soul and also a Flame Essence!

A medium-grade human-step Flame Essence and a possible high-grade human-step Thunder Soul!

Was this a power that a 16 year old boy could have!?!

The old man was suddenly afraid. He felt that this Lin Ming was too strange, he was just like a demon king hiding within humanity!

In his heart, he couldn't help but think about retreating. He hadn't exposed his true identity, and even if Lin Ming hadn't been bluffing about knowing his identity, he still hadn't revealed any clues to who he was. If he couldn't win, then he would flee!

As a Mirage Faction disciple, he was proficient in concealment techniques. As long as he was able to escape Lin Ming's true essence locking rage, he could easily escape in the night, losing Lin Ming.

In the worst case he would just not return to the Seven Profound Valleys. Although not returning to the Seven Profound Valleys was the same as severing his future hope of becoming a Xiantian master, preserving his life was much more important than some distant Xiantian realm.

The old man treasured his life very much. The reason that he would undertake this mission for Ouyang Boyan was because he wished to break through to the Xiantian realm and live to 180 years old.

The old man turned his palm, and a small thunderclap bead appeared. This was a small Array Faction gadget. Once it was thrown, it would explode and create a massive amount of thick fog.

He would be able to use this chance and display his illusion techniques to escape.

However, before he could throw the thunderclap bead, Lin Ming's Purple Comet Spear began to shine with a dazzling bright purple and a burning crimson red. In the dark night, it was just like a purple and red sun was rising into the sky!

Thunder and fire intertwined!

Lin Ming thrust out his spear. Suddenly, all the sounds of the world vanished, and the surrounding space twisted.

The old man's face was colored with fear; a dual thunder and fire attack!?

It was too late to run. The old man fiercely clenched his teeth, overdrawing his life essence to forcefully stimulate the true essence in his body to the max.

“72 Swords Absolute Killing Array!!”

This barrage of 72 sword energies was the old man's strongest move. Once he used it, he would be placed in an incomparably weak position for a short period of time. Because of this, he didn't dare to use it rashly. But now he had no other choice left to him. That shining red and purple power of thunder and fire on the spear was too terrifying to do otherwise.

Bang!

The spear light and sword energies struck each other. A horrifying true essence current billowed forth, and all the sword energies were completely shattered!

“What!?”

The old man had expected Lin Ming’s strike to be terrifying, but he never imagined that the strongest final blow he had overdrawn his life to use would be destroyed so easily!

....

....

On the outskirts of Green Mulberry City, the beast tide was still coming. The yellow-clothed youth from the Moon Seizing Sect had already killed thousands of vicious beasts, and the blood of countless vicious beasts rained down on the land, dying the earth around him a deep crimson red.

Every sword strike would release dozens of sword energies, and every sword energy was able to take a vicious beast’s life. With a single sword slash, this yellow-clothed youth was able to massacre dozens of vicious beasts. If it wasn’t for the fact that only a few vicious beasts were left around the yellow-clothed youth at the moment, he would have killed even more.

As for third-level vicious beasts, they were nothing but paper in front of the yellow-clothed youth, and equally as fragile. He was able to kill them with a single sword; there wasn't even a need to stop.

A fourth-level vicious beast would take at most 10 breaths of time to kill. The two Iron-armor Lizards that had attacked the yellow-clothed youth were also equally killed by him!

What kind of abnormal and terrifying strength was this?

Zhuang Fan, Lin Wanshan, and everyone else watching could only sigh in lamentation; martial artists from large sects were just too formidable.

Zhuang Fan and Lin Wanshan who had just stepped into the Pulse Condensation period thought this, and the common mortal soldiers were also stunned. To them, this yellow-clothed youth was just like a war god.

The yellow-clothed youth enjoyed this feeling very much. When he had been at the Moon Seizing Sect, he was only an inner court disciple, and had broken through to the Houtian realm when he was 26 years old. The result could only be considered the most average within the sect. There were just too many geniuses and top-tier talents pressing down on him, making him feel that his existence was weak.

Over the years, the yellow-clothed youth could be considered invisible. But now, he unveiled his power in front of so many

people, making him the rising star of this battlefield. This made him extremely happy; even the true essence in his body seemed to be flowing much smoothly than before.

Not just that, but most importantly, he would soon capture the heart of his talented junior-apprentice sister. As long as he was able to obtain her, he would have enough Heaven Opening Pills to attack the Xiantian bottleneck!

He had to thank the South Sea Demon Region. If it wasn't for them destroying the Moon Seizing Sect, he would never have had this opportunity. Most likely, he would never have had a chance to obtain a Heaven Opening Pill either.

The more the yellow-clothed youth killed, the more vibrant and excited he became. He had originally been hesitant about going to battle, but now he hoped that he could continue fighting for a long time.

But at this moment, he suddenly heard a loud explosion, and the land itself resounded with a deafening thunderclap. He turned his head to a distant spot in the beast tide, his eyes wide with amazement. Purple thunder flashed into the sky, impacting the heavens. Between it, a giant pillar of red flame also ascended upwards. It was as if heavenly tribulation had come down to the world!

‘Mm? What’s going on?’

Although the yellow-clothed youth was extremely far from where

it happened, he could still feel the terrifying energy contained in that explosion.

A peak Houtian thunder-attribute martial artist and a peak Houtian fire-attribute martial artist were fighting?

How could that be possible? In this small land, why would two great elders be fighting here?

The yellow-clothed youth hesitated, thinking he would go take a look. But then, those terrifying fluctuations of energy suddenly stopped, interrupted, as if they had been completely sealed off.

‘It’s gone?’

“Senior-apprentice Brother, what was that a moment ago?” The voice of the white-clothed girl’s true essence sound transmission resounded in the yellow-clothed youth’s ears.

The yellow-clothed youth was stunned. He immediately withdrew the shocked expression on his face and replaced it with a casual tone, saying, “Eh, probably some heavenly thunder.”

“Heavenly thunder?”

“Mm.” The yellow-clothed youth calmly analyzed and explained the situation, “If that terrifying power of thunder continued, it would most likely be two great masters fighting. But since it instantly vanished, it was most likely spring thunder that fell

down, splitting into heavenly fire. This kind of phenomenon isn't uncommon."

"But Senior-apprentice Brother... look at the sky."

"Mm?"

The yellow-clothed youth suddenly looked up, and then big beads of sweat began to immediately form on his forehead. Above him, the bright moon was shining in the sky like a silver plate, and the entire night was free of clouds, the stars shining brightly.

In this weather, how could there possibly be thunder?

.....

Ten miles away, a black-clothed man was kneeling on the ground, barely propping himself up with his sword. Half of his body was covered in soot and another half of his body's clothes were burnt away. The flexible armor underneath his clothes was fragmented, and his chest, stomach, arms, and legs dripped with fresh red blood.

This man was Bi Luo. Bi Luo had just fallen from the sky, and his illusion technique had been automatically dispelled, reverting from the appearance of an old man into his true self.

If it wasn't for him using a self-defensive ice armor bead at the last moment, he would have been severely wounded to the point of

losing every bit of combat strength he had left. If that happened, his fate could be imagined.

“Martial House Master Bi, did your sword strike from a moment ago overspend your true essence, thus causing you to be unable to support your illusion, revealing your true self?” Lin Ming asked the severely wounded Bi Luo, a faint smile crossing his face.

Lin Ming didn't use the full strength of Thunderfire Annihilation, only using one with 40% strength.

This was a technique that Lin Ming had slowly and thoroughly researched, then mastered after spending a month in Ancestor Chi Yan's mountain range.

The complete and full version of Thunderfire Annihilation was very slow, it had a long activation time. It also consumed a great deal of strength. Not just that, but with Lin Ming's current cultivation, simultaneously controlling a low-grade earth-step Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder and medium-grade human-step Earthcore Crimson Flame was impossible.

If he rashly used the complete Thunderfire Annihilation, he might not be able to control the power, and would probably kill himself in the explosion he created.

“You...” Bi Luo's eyes were filled with disbelief as he stared at Lin Ming. Lin Ming's current strength had completely surpassed the scope of his understanding. This was a strength that was impossible for a 16 year old youth to have.

“Hahahahaha!” Bi Luo suddenly smiled, laughing with unbridled impunity.

“Lin Ming, you think that you can kill me today? I may not be your match, but if I wish to leave, you cannot stop me! You have a high-grade human-step Thunder Soul on your body? If I spread this news, then how many Xiantian masters will take an interest in you?” An evil and vengeful smile curved on Bi Luo’s face.

Lin Ming blankly looked at Bi Luo, not seeming to care for his words.

“Normally, even if someone were interested in you, you could still stay in the sect and no one would dare to touch you. But now... Divine Phoenix Island and the South Sea Demon Region are about to go to war. In such chaos, do you really think you can always be protected?

“Lin Ming, you are too confident in yourself. But then again, geniuses are always so confident, that is why they die so easily! You thought you could lure me out by hiding your strength? You think you can kill me? Since I dared to kill you, then I naturally have ways to save my own life. You... you cannot stop me!”

“You think I can’t stop you?” The corners of Lin Ming’s lips lifted in a faint smile, revealing a thoughtful expression.

Chapter 328 – No Path to Heaven, No Door to Earth

“You think I can’t stop you?” The corners of Lin Ming’s lips lifted in a faint smile, revealing a thoughtful expression.

Seeing Lin Ming’s smile, Bi Luo’s heart inexplicably went cold. This boy, did he have some plan?

Bi Luo had always treasured his own life beyond all else. He was an expert in many different kinds of escaping techniques, and the Mirage Faction was originally a sect that specialized in camouflage and escape.

Bi Luo was absolutely confident in his own methods and techniques to escape, unless he ran into a Xiantian realm powerhouse. Otherwise, even if he was up against a top half-step Houtian master, he had faith he would be able to run away.

“Lin Ming, you are still so confident! Then why don’t you try and stop me!”

As Bi Luo spoke, his entire body began to shake, and his complexion instantly turned bone-white. A mass of bloody fog spurted from his body, soaring around him in the wind. Bi Luo’s body turned into a flash of blood-colored light as he soared like an arrow in the opposite direction, his speed reaching an inconceivable degree!

Illusionary Blood Escape Technique!

The Illusionary Blood Escape Technique was a skill that required one to damage one's blood essence and life. They could use this escaping technique to multiply their speed by 10 for a short period of time. This was a speed that not even a Xiantian realm martial artist would be able to catch up to, even if they tried their hardest.

This was also the reason that Bi Luo was so confident in himself. Of course, he could only maintain this extreme speed for an incense stick of time, but that was more than enough time to lose Lin Ming or any Houtian master. He could look for a safe place to hide and restore himself.

Using the Illusionary Blood Escape Technique was the final reserve move of an illusionist. After using it, it would be difficult to recover to one's peak condition even in half a year. Bi Luo was compelled to do this; otherwise, he would never have used such a drastic technique.

You want to run away?

Lin Ming sneered, and didn't even move or attack. In truth, he really didn't have time to attack – Bi Luo was that quick.

The air trembled, wind whistled; Bi Luo was like a bloody meteor that impacted into the horizon.

Peng!!!

There was a muffled smashing sound as the blood fog surrounding Bi Luo suddenly smacked into an invisible barrier. In that instant, his flesh and blood burst apart, and fresh red blood spewed into the sky.

This was just like an overly ripe tomato that was thrown against a glass window with full force; it was directly turned to pulp.

The spatial light screen suddenly shook fiercely for a brief moment, then... the blood-covered Bi Luo, who looked like a lump of rotten meat, slowly slid down from the air.

From start to finish, Lin Ming hadn't even moved.

Bi Luo's entire body was covered in blood, almost every single bone of his body had been shattered. "I... I..."

As soon as Bi Luo opened his big mouth, blood and chunks of organs poured up from within him like a geyser.

He stretched out his broken and trembling arm; he was soaked in blood, his face full of unwillingness and utter disbelief.

"Martial House Master Bi, you spent your blood essence to reach an extreme speed, and yet you actually ran so brutally into an invisible dream world enchantment that you couldn't see. In the mortal commoner world, there is a saying where people kill themselves by smashing their heads against a wall. But I never

expected that it was the same for martial artists...” As Lin Ming drawled on, Bi Luo was angry to the point of almost fainting.

“When you were struck by my Thunderfire Annihilation, I had already laid down a dream world enchantment all around us. I was told that this enchantment could only be broken by a Xiantian master, and would isolate all information within and without. Did Martial House Master Bi panic and just flee anywhere, not even noticing the enchantment that was laid down?”

With Bi Luo’s cultivation, if he was even the least bit alert, he would have been able to discover the energy fluctuations of the enchantment world. It could only be said that he was too frightened of Lin Ming, and had panicked in trying to escape.

“En... enchantment world...” Bi Luo’s lips trembled as he watched Lin Ming’s Purple Comet Spear come closer and closer, his face incomparably pale. When a man who was afraid of death approached their time of death, they would fear even more. “Lin Ming... please... don’t kill me. I am Sky Fortune Kingdom’s Seven Profound Martial House Deputy House Master. For better or for worse, I am still your teacher. In the future you will become a Peerless Emperor. For a worthless person like me, don’t gain the title of being a person who killed their teacher...”

Lin Ming paused, somewhat surprised. Then he began to laugh. This was absolutely the most mentally challenged joke he had heard in his life. “You think you are my teacher? Haha... I have seen shameless people, but never one as shameless as you. You used your illusions to deceive me into walking in a trap; when have you ever once thought of me as your student?”

“I was wrong. I was possessed by my own obsessions. If you let me live, I can help you testify against Ouyang Boyan and reveal everything. With your current status, as long as you can prove that Ouyang Boyan has tried to harm you, then Shi Zongtian will absolutely help you deal with Ouyang Boyan... he might even kill him!” Before Bi Luo died, his mind suddenly sobered, and everything became clear. This was the final straw he had left to grasp.

He was only an unimportant figure. Ouyang Boyan was Lin Ming’s true threat. In Bi Luo’s mind, it was impossible for Lin Ming’s power to surpass Ouyang Boyan in a short time.

“Testify against Ouyang Boyan?” Lin Ming hesitated, thinking about it. This didn’t sound like a horrible plan.

“...Yes, yes! As long as I testify and lay the blame on him, even if there is no evidence, Shi Zongtian will be suspicious of him. As long as he suspects Ouyang Boyan, he will send people to monitor him. When that time comes...”

It was like the drowning Bi Luo had finally found a piece of driftwood. He clung to it, speaking more and more excitedly, trying to straighten himself on the ground. But at this time, a cold bright light suddenly flashed; the Purple Comet Spear instantly pierced through Bi Luo’s throat.

The spear went in, and the spear went out; it was all finished in a moment, as if nothing had happened except a gaping crimson hole

had appeared in Bi Luo's neck...

Bi Luo's eyes looked as if he had lost his spirit. He reached out his hand, as if he were trying to grab something. "...Why..." Because his vocal cords had been torn, Bi Luo's voice was completely hoarse.

"I apologize, but I don't believe you. And most importantly... if I don't kill you here, my thoughts won't be clear." Lin Ming indifferently said as he withdrew his Purple Comet Spear.

"Thoughts... won't be... clear... because of... this... haha..." Bi Luo laughed, and then tumbled onto the floor, lifeless.

Although Lin Ming knew that if he listened to Bi Luo's words, he might have a 70 to 80% chance of resolving the crisis caused by Ouyang Boyan, Bi Luo was someone who held a grudge against him, and Bi Luo was also someone that Lin Ming was disgusted with. Lin Ming's martial arts path was to act in accordance with his thoughts and his nature. He didn't want to endure Bi Luo's miserable life continuing in this world just because he was afraid of potential dangers.

And if Bi Luo really were to testify against Ouyang Boyan in the future, he would make Lin Ming take an oath on his heart of martial artist that Lin Ming wouldn't kill him later.

Lin Ming would not compromise like that with a villain.

Moreover, Lin Ming had a crazy plan in his mind. He wanted to kill Ouyang Boyan and test out the hypothesis he had.

Lin Ming looked at Bi Luo's corpse, then took out a dagger from his spatial ring. He cut out some of Bi Luo's blood essence and tried to have the Magic Cube absorb it. The result was disappointing. It was as if after the second time the Magic Cube had opened, it had lost all interest in a Houtian master's blood essence.

Bi Luo was the second Houtian master that Lin Ming had killed. He was able to confirm that a Houtian master's blood essence was no longer useful to the Magic Cube.

“My guess isn't wrong, I just don't know if a Xiantian master's blood essence can open the Magic Cube again...” Lin Ming muttered to himself.

After he killed Ouyang Boyan and took his blood essence, he would try to open the Magic Cube again...

This was Lin Ming's plan.

The Magic Cube was from the Realm of the Gods. In the Realm of the Gods, Houtian masters and Xiantian masters were the same as ants. If the Magic Cube was a divine object that countless Supreme Elders would fight over, how could it be content with the blood essence of a mere Houtian master?

Maybe only blood essence on the level of the reverse scale blood

could arouse the Magic Cube's interest?

Lin Ming still remembered when he had first absorbed the reverse scale blood. At that time, his cultivation was insufficient, and Yan Mo's intention was to seal the reverse scale blood in his body and wait for his cultivation to reach a sufficient level, then slowly absorb it.

As soon as the reverse scale blood had entered Lin Ming's body, the Magic Cube had become restless, sending out a strong suppressive power and nearly taking the reverse scale blood from Lin Ming's hands.

When the reverse scale blood had almost been swallowed by the Magic Cube, it had panicked and decided it would prefer to fuse with Lin Ming.

After his accident, the Magic Cube had actually stopped trying to absorb the reverse scale blood, but instead helped Lin Ming fuse with the reverse scale blood by its own initiative.

Because of this, Lin Ming was able to reach a conclusion.

The Magic Cube was intelligent, and was not some dead object.

Then Lin Ming had a faint guess. What the Magic Cube wanted was not the blood essence of a Houtian master, Xiantian master, or even a Revolving Core master; it couldn't take a liking to the blood essence of such low-level existences. What it wanted was the blood

essence of a true powerhouse; for instance, Supreme Elders from the Realm of the Gods.

The reason it had absorbed a Houtian master's blood essence was only to send a signal – that it needed blood essence!

But for what reason was it absorbing blood essence?

Lin Ming always thought that the Magic Cube had a somewhat strange nature.

When it was in its own world, it had swallowed the souls of so many Supreme Elders from the Realm of the Gods, causing a catastrophic calamity within the Realm of the Gods. Now that it was in Lin Ming's hands, it began to absorb blood!

Eat souls!

Absorb blood!

These were concepts only found within the cultivation methods of demonic beings. Was it possible that the person who created the Magic Cube was a Demon God?

Lin Ming was not opposed to demonic ways. Any strength – as long as it was powerful – could be used by him as long as it didn't betray his own consciousness.

After there weren't any results for a long time, Lin Ming put away Bi Luo's corpse and quickly returned to the frontline of the army compound.

After he made his way back, Lin Ming found that not only had the beast tide not stopped yet, but it was becoming increasingly violent and dangerous. More and more high-grade vicious beasts were joining the fray, pouring in!

"Fourth-level vicious beasts, and also two of them?" Lin Ming furrowed his eyebrows. If fourth-level vicious beasts kept appearing, sooner or later fifth-level vicious beasts would appear!

Even if it were Lin Ming, dealing with a fifth-level vicious beast would be extremely difficult!

"This is a bit troublesome..." Lin Ming's complexion became solemn.

These weren't just Lin Ming's thoughts, but also the thoughts of all the high-level characters in Green Mulberry City. The waves of vicious beasts this night was much more terrifying than during the day. More and more vicious beasts appeared; over half the army had become casualties.

This was because of the support from the yellow-clothed youth. Otherwise, the beast tide would have already broken into the city.

"This Lin Ming, the city is almost broken into, so where did he

go? If he can't be counted on in a critical moment, he might as well be an outsider!"

Zhu Ping put on a haughty air and coldly humphed. Out of all the people present, he was the only one who knew of Bi Luo, and he was also extremely anxious. He didn't know if Bi Luo had succeeded in killing Lin Ming. If he was successful, then why hadn't he come back? To defend Green Mulberry City, he was also counting on Bi Luo's strength.

Chapter 329 – The Feeling of Being Ignored

Hearing Zhu Ping's words that were dripping with irony, Lin Wanshan's complexion became extremely unsightly. "Zhu Ping, what are you trying to say? Didn't Lin Ming go out to fight the enemy?"

"I didn't say that. I'm only saying what I know. From the very start, he ran into the pack of beasts, and now there isn't even his shadow. If it wasn't for that yellow-clothed knight, our army might have already been broken through."

As Zhu Ping spoke here, he glanced at Shi Linkai with open contempt. Originally, Shi Linkai had wanted to throw the yellow-clothed youth, and matters had almost boiled down to a fight. As for Zhu Ping, he was very respectful and managed to have the yellow-clothed youth stay in Green Mulberry City. If it wasn't for his actions, who knows what would have happened in today's battle.

Shi Linkai was just retreating from the battlefield to take a rest when he caught wind of Zhu Ping's words. His face turned red as he said, "Surname Zhu, what are you trying to say!?"

"What? Clan Leader Shi thinks differently? If you fought with that yellow-clothed knight, do you think you could have won?"

Shi Linkai paused, he didn't have anything he could say. If he really did fight with that yellow-clothed youth, he would have been beaten up, maybe even killed.

As several people were speaking, the yellow-clothed youth had just engaged with two fourth-level vicious beasts.

They were two Double-headed Corrupt Wind Wolves, fourth-level vicious beasts that had excellent speed. They attacked the yellow-clothed youth from the right and the left, but were completely not the yellow-clothed youth's match. In just a few sword slashes, the Double-headed Corrupt Wind Wolves turned into puddles of blood.

“Fierce!”

Lin Wanshan couldn't help but acknowledge that this yellow-clothed youth was truly strong. He had persisted in this one-sided massacre for so long, had killed thousands of vicious beasts, and didn't seem to be running low on true essence.

But as for him, Zhuang Fan, Shi Linkai, and the others, they had fought for only a quarter of the time and their true essence was exhausted. They had to fall back to the army camp and recover their strength.

Together, the three of them only managed to kill two or three hundred vicious beasts, a mere fraction of what the yellow-clothed youth killed. The disparity between them was just too great.

As Lin Wanshan's eyes left the yellow-clothed youth, he looked over to where Lin Ming had disappeared, his heart secretly worrying. Just where did Lin Ming go? Only two or three quarters

of an hour had passed, but he hadn't even heard from Lin Ming since then. There was also that heavenly thunder that had flashed a moment ago; why would there be thunder in such a clear night sky?

Seeing Lin Wanshan's anxious appearance, Zhuang Fan said, "Old Lin, don't worry, everything should be fine." Because the Zhuang Family and the Lin Family often cooperated in business, the two families had good relations with each other.

Shi Linkai added, "Hero Lin is strong so there isn't anything to worry about. Even if he encounters several fourth-level vicious beasts, they are not his match. And with Hero Lin's speed, he can retreat whenever he wants, he is much quicker than these vicious beasts."

Hearing several people talk, Zhu Ping sneered in his heart. Fourth-level vicious beast? What if he encountered fourth-level vicious beasts, and then was sneak attacked by a master?

That old man's strength had reached the late Houtian realm. It wasn't wrong that Lin Ming was a master from a sect, but that old man was too!

Not just that, but the old man was proficient in sneak attacks and concealment techniques. With these skills – and it being a late Houtian master against a boy at the middle Pulse Condensation period – Lin Ming would surely die in the middle of such chaotic combat. Even if Lin Ming had hidden strength, he still wouldn't be able to block such a strike!

Although he hadn't known the old man for very long, Zhu Ping could feel that the old man acted in a very safe and cautious manner. He would not do something daring. If the old man said he had a 70 or 80% chance of success, then he wouldn't fail!

Thinking that Lin Ming had died tonight, Zhu Ping was incomparable excited. 'Just wait, your Lin Family's good luck is about to come to an end. As soon as Lin Ming dies and the Tenth Prince ascends the throne, the Zhu Family will marry another woman to the Tenth Prince as the empress. Then, my Zhu Family will rise into the top three families of the Sky Fortune Kingdom. But as for your Lin Ming, they will become history!'

Thinking of the Zhu Family's endlessly bright and magnificent future, Zhu Ping's fantasies became a bit carried away. He couldn't help but gloat as he said, "Young Hero Lin is certainly fast, but sometimes on the battlefield things don't go as planned. If there is any mistake, death wouldn't be too surprising. A virtuous and kind man like Young Hero Lin will certainly be blessed by the heavens, so he should be safe. But in case anything happens, Brother Wanshan should be prepared..."

Lin Wanshan was furious. His anger was about to blow up when suddenly, a loud and cold "humph" resounded in the air, like a muffled cry of thunder in the ears of everyone nearby. When Zhu Ping heard this sound, he felt his entire body shake, his face paling and being forced to take several steps back. The blood in his body violently surged, and he was almost injured.

"Army Commander Zhu, I'm sorry to disappoint you."

In the army compound, a figure emerged from the shadows, his hand holding a long purple spear. This shadow was Lin Ming.

In that instant, all the blood drained from Zhu Ping's face!

No... impossible... didn't that old man say he was going to kill Lin Ming?

Did that mean that Lin Ming had instead killed that old man?

No, this was impossible, absolutely impossible! That old man's strength had reached the late Houtian realm, and he was also a martial artist from a sect. Looking back, it could be said that even if Lin Ming defeated that old man, it was impossible for him not to be wounded.

Where did the old man go? Listening to the intent behind Lin Ming's words, he had already deduced what was happening!

Seeing Zhu Ping's frightened and panicked expression, Lin Ming faintly smiled as he said, "Army Command Zhu, you seem to be very nervous about me coming back safely. Do I look scarier than some vicious beast?"

Lin Ming smiled, but his eyes were cold and pitiless, with a thick murderous intent seeping out. Zhu Ping felt a chill freeze his heart. Before, Lin Ming had always given the impression of a mediocre boy that was harmless. In fact, he had even seemed like he would

be easy to bully. This was the impression that Lin Ming had developed in his 15 years of growing up in Green Mulberry City. This image had been set in the minds of many for a long time, and was difficult to change.

Although Zhu Ping was well aware of Lin Ming's current status, with the support of the old man, he had always subconsciously thought of Lin Ming as a boy with half a foot in the grave. He spoke to Lin Ming respectfully, but in his heart he wasn't afraid of him.

But now, facing Lin Ming's merciless eyes, Zhu Ping felt as if his very soul had been penetrated. An invisible suppressive force pressed down on him, causing him to break out in a cold sweat!

Now, he was horrified to see that Lin Ming was no longer that green and naïve boy that was easy to bully, but instead a super master that held the life and death of mortals in his hands!

Zhu Ping gulped, forced a smile and said, "Young Hero Lin, please don't joke with me... since Young Hero Lin has come back safely, I am of course incomparably happy. With Young Hero Lin here, defending Green Mulberry City will be much easier."

"Oh? So it's like this? Haha..." Lin Ming was still brightly smiling, but that smiling face caused Zhu Ping to shiver; it was a pressure from pure and utter domination of strength.

'Calm down... calm down...' Zhu Ping repeated to himself. Even if that old man's sneak attack failed, Lin Ming wouldn't necessarily know that he was related to him. At best, he would only have a

guess. There was no evidence.

Zhu Ping comforted himself by thinking this. What he didn't realize – or what he didn't want to realize – was that things such as evidence, rules, laws, or things like that only applied when two individuals were of similar status. For instance, if a normal person was accusing another person, or a high level sect martial artist was accusing another high level sect martial artist.

For those with such an enormous gap in status, for instance, between Lin Ming and Zhu Ping, one didn't even need evidence. Lin Ming's words would become evidence; his words would become the rules, his words would become the law!

At this moment, Lin Ming suddenly heard a pleasant voice, "Perhaps that is Young Hero Lin Ming? My name is Lan Yi, I would like to greet you."

Lin Ming turned his head and saw that the one speaking was the white-clothed girl from the Moon Seizing Sect.

After she came to Green Mulberry City she had bathed, and had already changed into a loose dress made from snow silk. She had the full and mature figure of a beauty, and her clothes were carefully cut close to the body, accentuating her graceful and slim waist. She appeared delicate and exquisite; it was easy to fall into a daydream looking at her.

Lan Yi?

Lin Ming had a very accurate and good memory. He thought back for a moment and didn't recall this person's name on the name lists of the joint talent training program.

An 18 or 19 year old girl that reached the peak Pulse Condensation period and wasn't on the joint talent training program? Or, was she hiding her real name?

Lin Ming was only casually wondering. He politely greeted her, "So it's Miss Lan. It's nice to meet you."

Lan Yi returned a faint smile and said, "Young Hero Lin, a moment ago, southeast of here there was a strike of heavenly thunder that appeared. I wonder if Young Hero Lin witnessed it?"

As Lan Yi asked, her beautiful eyes were wide. When the joint talent training program was first announced, she hadn't gone to the Seven Profound Valleys. But, she had heard many rumors of Lin Ming. She had heard that he was a 16 year old that had just reached the early Pulse Condensation period, but was actually able to defeat multiple peak Pulse Condensation period geniuses. It was also said that Lin Ming was a thunder-attribute martial artist with an astonishingly high fusion compatibility, and controlled a surpassingly mighty thunder energy weapon.

This youth in front of her was also named Lin Ming, and his age appeared to be around 16 too. However, his cultivation was at the middle Pulse Condensation period, just a bit higher than the Seven Profound Valleys' Lin Ming. But, if Lin Ming had recently broken through, this would also make sense.

This caused an inevitable association in Lan Yi's mind. Was that terrifying heavenly thunder that occurred a moment ago caused by Lin Ming? The chief disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys, and the only heaven-step talent chosen by Divine Phoenix Island? That Lin Ming?

She had just come to this city, but had encountered the legendary top talent of the 19 third grade sects. The circumstances of this situation were just too bizarre.

Lan Yi didn't have high hopes that this was true, she was only thinking that it might be possible. If he really was Lin Ming... then he might be able to help her fulfill her wish...

Thinking this, Lan Yi widened her smile, trying to seem friendlier. But she had never done these things before, so it was a bit awkward for her.

Lin Ming saw Lan Yi's supposedly sweet smile and was a bit doubtful. His impression of the white-clothed girl was that she had a very cold and frigid personality. Of course, this was reasonable. Just a few days ago her entire sect was destroyed, along with everyone else she knew, so she would absolutely be in a horrible mood. But why was she suddenly smiling so brightly at him?

Lin Ming nodded and said, "I saw the heavenly thunder. Why? Does Miss Lan think that a rare heavenly treasure fell down to the world?"

.....

As Lin Ming was speaking, the yellow-clothed youth suddenly released a stunning sword technique on the battlefield, killing another Two-headed Corrupt Wind Wolf. The soldiers on the field let loose thunderous cheers.

The yellow-clothed youth liked this feeling very much. He had grown up within the Moon Seizing Sect, and had never felt like he existed, let alone enjoyed so many cheers from people.

He turned back to glance at the army compound, his eyes filled with expectation. The yellow-clothed youth wanted to see his little junior-apprentice sister watching him instantly slay the fourth-level vicious beast with his sword in a grand and majestic fashion. However, he happened to see Lan Yi standing near Lin Ming, a warm and sweet smile spreading across her face, as if she were having happy conversation with him.

She didn't even spare him a glance...

Chapter 330 – Fight

Seeing this, the yellow-clothed youth's heart burned with a raging anger!

Because of the tragedy of her sect being destroyed, there hadn't been times these days when Lan Yi smiled. Even though he flattered and pleased her in every way possible, taking meticulous care of her, the white-clothed girl rarely responded. In the first two days, she hadn't even spoken more than a few words, only having a heartbroken expression.

But now, she was actually smiling so brightly, and also towards another youth who was around her age.

How could the yellow-clothed youth possibly bear this?

He had endured so much suffering and hardship on the way, exhausting himself to take care of her, only to have a few words uttered towards him. And yet this smelly little boy sweet talked her for a little bit and the white-clothed girl was already smiling so happily!

The yellow-clothed youth's lungs exploded with rage.

He never imagined that it was Lan Yi who looked for Lin Ming of her own initiative; he only thought that Lin Ming was cozying up to Lan Yi with his sweet nothings.

Although there hadn't been much progress in their relationship, the yellow-clothed youth already considered the white-clothed girl as his exclusive woman. This wasn't just from the tragic story of a man's 20 plus years of life, or from the fact that he possessed a strong desire to possess her that was a twisted incarnation of his thoughts of wanting to subtly take revenge for all those years that she had been an irreproachable goddess. It was because the white-clothed girl had many Heaven Opening Pills on her. Those Heaven Opening Pills were his only hope to break through to the Xiantian realm!

“Motherf*cker! I'm killing all these vicious beasts on the battlefield, and not only is that coward not doing anything, but he's actually moving on my girl from behind!”

The yellow-clothed youth was raging. He felt like he had been taken for a fool. This city that he was saving from the vicious beast horde was that boy's, and not only was he not doing anything, but he was also moving on his woman. At that moment, all of his murderous thoughts converged onto Lin Ming. The difference in attitude that Lan Yi treated Lin Ming with was like a thorn that pierced his heart. If he didn't cripple Lin Ming, he would never be able to swallow this insult.

“Boy, just you wait for me!”

The yellow-clothed youth turned around and rapidly returned to the army camp.

.....

In the army camp, Lan Yi was still talking to Lin Ming. Lan Yi didn't know much about Lin Ming to begin with, so she made a few simple insinuations to see if this boy in front of her was the Lin Ming from the Seven Profound Valleys.

This sort of matter was impolite to directly ask. Otherwise, Lin Ming might form an idea that she was trying get close to him because she had some hidden purpose in mind. Once that happened, it would be easy for him to despise her.

Lan Yi was well aware of the difference in status between her and Lin Ming. Not to mention that her Moon Seizing Sect had already been destroyed, but even if the Moon Seizing Sect was still here, the difference between her and Lin Ming was just too far.

According to rumors, if Lin Ming didn't encounter some tragedy, he would one day step into the Revolving Core realm. But as for Lan Yi, it was already nearly impossible for her to reach the extreme xiantian realm. If things turned out well for her in the future, she might reach the middle Xiantian realm, and if she very lucky, she might reach the late Xiantian realm.

If the Moon Seizing Sect weren't destroyed, Lan Yi would have thought this quite satisfactory.

But several days ago, she saw with her own eyes all of her friends, family and everyone else close to her in the Moon Seizing Sect slaughtered in a one-sided bloodbath. As she saw everyone she held dear dying around her, and as she listened to the last dying wish of

her master, hatred had already engraved itself deeply into her heart!

At that time, she completely hated herself. She hated that she was weak. She hated that in front of a Revolving Core master, she was nothing but an ant, unable to do anything.

This sort of loathing that originated from her powerlessness caused her to have an intense desire for power. She wished to break through to the Revolving Core realm, and longed for the day that she could unite all the masters of the South Horizon Region to exterminate the South Sea Demon Region. She would ruin the evil ones, exterminate the demons, and take revenge for her Moon Seizing Sect – and for her master and countless fellow disciples that died!

Now, Lan Yi had the resources and final hope that her master had given her before telling her to escape from the Moon Seizing Sect. She was confused about what path to take. She didn't dare to flee to other sects, afraid that they would covet the precious resources that she had.

However, if she didn't go to a sect, it would be difficult for her to become stronger, much less break through to the Revolving Core realm.

At this time, Lan Yi had a thought of which sect she should go to – Divine Phoenix Island.

At Divine Phoenix Island, 90% of the disciples were women, and

the disciples had a relatively good reputation for conduct. Not only that, but there were countless masters and top cultivation methods, inheritances, and abundant resources. If she could enter Divine Phoenix Island, then that would be the best possible outcome.

But, Lan Yi was only a genius when placed in a low third-grade sect like the Moon Seizing Sect. As for a top fourth-grade sect like Divine Phoenix Island, she would only be the most basic and generic of disciples. It was even likely that she wouldn't be able to enter. And even if she did manage to enter with luck, she would be an outer court disciple at best. It would be impossible for her to come into contact with the core cultivation methods, and she would waste her life.

In that situation, Lan Yi was also confused about what to do.

Until now, when she met a boy that she suspected was Lin Ming.

Lan Yi knew that Divine Phoenix Island placed a great deal of value on Lin Ming, and there was possibly even some unknown relation between him and Divine Phoenix Island's Saintess, Mu Qianyu.

What kind of existence was Mu Qianyu?

She was the future leader of Divine Phoenix Island. She was a monstrous talent that stepped into the Xiantian realm at only 22 years of age. And within several years, she might break into the Revolving Core realm and become a top master!

In front of someone like Mu Qianyu, all of the so-called talents of the 19 third-grade sects were just a joke.

If Mu Qianyu could put in a few good words of recommendation for her, even if it were only casual, she could be promoted from an outer court disciple to an inner court disciple. This was just a one word difference, but the treatment was vastly different. Lan Yi didn't want the resources of Divine Phoenix Island such as pills or true essence stones. What she wanted were the legacy cultivation methods.

To rely on the mediocre cultivation methods of the Moon Seizing Sect to break through to the Revolving Core realm was basically impossible!

Of course, Lan Yi wasn't planning on asking Lin Ming for help and offering nothing in return. She had only met Lin Ming by chance, they hardly knew each other, so why would he want to help her?

Lan Yi's thoughts were that first she would establish friendly relations with Li Ming, and then at a suitable time she would put out some of the resources from the Moon Seizing Sect as exchange, and then ask Lin Ming for help.

"Miss Lan, if there isn't anything else, I'll head back to the battlefield then."

Lin Ming didn't want to waste time talking to Lan Yi. There were

too many vicious beasts, and the army was under a great deal of pressure. Every second meant that another soldier could die.

“Young Hero Lin, can you wait for a bit? My senior-apprentice brother is out at the front, he can last for a moment or two.” As Lan Yi spoke these words, the yellow-clothed youth had just rushed back, and happened to hear Lan Yi’s words.

‘My senior-apprentice brother is out at the front, he can last for a moment or two.’

The meaning behind this was that while the yellow-clothed youth would be fighting at the front, the two of them could continue to chat.

F*ck!

The yellow-clothed youth was mad to the point of almost vomiting blood. Never in his entire life had he been so mad. He had been taken for such a fool. He had gone to fight the beast tide, yet someone wanted to take his woman?

‘A mere common Pulse Condensation boy actually had thoughts on Lan Yi? What is so good about you? Are you worthy?’

‘So what if you’re a genius? This father will kill you now!’

Ka!

With harsh wind blowing, the angry yellow-clothed youth landed on the ground. He stood in front of Lin Ming, a sullen and simmering expression on his face, his lips constantly twitching.

“Boy, you have guts!”

Lin Ming tilted his head, frowning. He didn't understand why this yellow-clothed youth had suddenly rushed towards him like a rabid dog and starting barking.

“Senior-apprentice Brother, what are you saying!”

The white-clothed girl was startled. She hurriedly ran in front of Lin Ming, blocking him. She didn't know why the yellow-clothed youth had suddenly rushed up like he wanted a taste of Lin Ming's spear, but with that murderous look in his eyes, he wanted to start a fight with Lin Ming.

“Junior-apprentice Sister! You... you're protecting him?” The yellow-clothed youth tightly gripped the sword in his hand, biting his pale lips.

“Good! Very good!” The yellow-clothed youth stared at Lin Ming with hatred in his eyes. He said in a true essence sound transmission, “You are surnamed Lin? Surname Lin, let me clearly tell you now that my junior-apprentice sister is not someone that a common man like you can match up with! Now leave her alone!”

Seeing the situation rapidly devolve like this, Lan Yi was extremely nervous. She quickly sent the yellow-clothed youth a true essence sound transmission, “Senior-apprentice Brother, what are you doing? Do you know who he is?”

“Who is he!? Why would I care who he is!” The yellow-clothed youth almost went insane to the point of losing all reasoning, so why would he consider Lan Yi’s words? This boy had actually moved on his woman. Even if he was the emperor of heaven, he still wouldn’t be able to stand this!

And in this trivial little mortal city, just what sort of amazing character could there be?

“I’m warning you one last time, hurry up and get away from her. Otherwise, I will have you pay a deep price!” The yellow-clothed youth used a true essence sound transmission to threaten Lin Ming again.

“Crazy idiot.”

Lin Ming didn’t want to bother with this rabid dog anymore and waste his time. He was also disinclined to explain the misunderstanding. It was better to say that he disdained giving an explanation. With his strength and status, why would he even want to waste his breath arguing with this yellow-clothed youth?

The beast tide was becoming increasingly fierce, and now several masters were returning to the army camp. The army would soon be unable to cope with the beast tide.

At that moment, the beast tide ripped a hole in the army's defensive wall.

Mm?

Lin Ming frowned, took out the Purple Comet Spear, and directly rushed towards the vicious beast tide.

“You want to run away?” The yellow-clothed youth sneered, raising his sword and following. He basically hadn't listened to listen to Lan Yi's words.

“Are you a turtle? You don't dare to compete with me in killing vicious beasts, and you also are too afraid to kill fourth-level vicious beasts. You only run away, are you still a man?”

The army formation was broken, and the beast tide rushed in. The death toll was rapidly increasing; where would Lin Ming have the time to bother with this yellow-clothed youth?

In the blink of an eye, all of the vicious beasts at the gap were instantly cleared away! The nearby soldiers didn't even have time to react.

After resolving the threat of Bi Luo, Lin Ming naturally had no need to hide his strength anymore.

The might of this spear move was only displayed through a casual sweep, but it actually caused Lan Yi's eyes to contract. This was a power that surpassed the limits of a Pulse Condensation period martial artist, and he could even compare with the yellow-clothed youth. At least, it was no less than his.

Lan Yi didn't even have time to think about what this meant when her face suddenly paled. She watched as the yellow-clothed youth thrust out with his sword, and over a dozen sword energies pierced towards Lin Ming's back, the wind rippling in their wake!

"Boy, you actually dare to ignore me? Take my sword!" In his apoplectic anger, the yellow-clothed youth didn't hold back. These sword energies were aimed towards Lin Ming's vital points. If they hit, it would be enough to cut Lin Ming's meridians, severely wounding him, or even crippling him!

"Shameless! Don't you even care for face!?" Lin Ming's complexion sank. Now that the beat tide was rushing in, he didn't want to fight with this yellow-clothed youth. But this yellow-clothed youth chasing him again and again caused him to lose his patience.

Bang!

A spear swept out, and azure true essence howled forth. There were only slight popping sounds as all of the sword energies of the yellow-clothed youth were shattered by Lin Ming's spear.

Chapter 331 – Sludge Monster

The yellow-clothed youth was shocked as he saw Lin Ming shatter all of his sword energies. This boy, he had some real skill!

He hadn't stayed his hand in that last strike, but because he had slashed out so quickly, he hadn't used the sword techniques and cultivation methods of the Moon Seizing Sect. The power in that last move was only 20-30% of his strongest sword technique.

“I wonder how many swords you can block? Sword Energy Transverse!”

The aura of the yellow-clothed youth suddenly changed, true essence twining around his body, becoming sharp and deadly. Murderous intent surged out from him.

The yellow-clothed youth was prepared to fight with everything he had.

Lin Ming's expression sank. He only thought that this misunderstanding was strange and inexplicable. Even if he explained it, the explanation wouldn't be clear. How would the yellow-clothed youth ever believe that the goddess of his heart had approached Lin Ming by her own initiative? Even if Lin Ming could prove it, this yellow-clothed youth still wouldn't accept it.

Lin Ming flourished his spear, the power of thunder sparkling. True essence jetted into the air like fabric that was being harshly torn.

Although the yellow-clothed youth wasn't too talented, for better or for worse he was still a Houtian master from a sect. If Lin Ming wanted to end this battle quickly, he had to take it seriously. The Heretical God Force still hadn't been fully restored, but even if it was, Lin Ming wouldn't use it just for this.

As the battle between the two was about to begin, at that moment, a gigantic roar resounded throughout the entire battle field, no different than a thunderclap.

The yellow-clothed youth was startled, his heart trembling. He looked towards the depths of the beast tide and saw a vast shadow moving towards them, shaped like a hill.

The yellow-clothed youth was shocked; what was that!?

Lin Ming was also taken aback, his expression becoming solemn.

“Fifth-level vicious beast?”

A fourth-level vicious beast was already equal to a common mortal's Houtian level martial artist. As for a fifth-level vicious beast, that was equal to a common mortal's Xiantian level martial artist!

Of course, because martial artists of the common world had an unstable foundation, they had practically no chance of ever reaching the Xiantian realm. Thus, this level of strength didn't

actually exist. A fifth-level vicious beast was most likely equal to a sect's peak Houtian martial artist, or even one that was a half-step into the Xiantian realm.

This was also Qin Ziya's strength.

“ROAR!”

The terrifying roar was no different to landslides and tsunamis, the entire ground shook.

When an ordinary person heard this roar, their ears became deaf and their mind shook. Many soldiers whose strength were already at the limit were almost thrown to the floor with this roar.

As a result, the formation made up of thousands of soldiers was suddenly in disarray, in a precarious situation!

In contrast, the tens of thousands of vicious beasts that heard this roar became even more ferocious, as if they had been doused in blood.

The entire battlefield was in chaos.

Zhuang Fan and Lin Wanshan's complexions changed. The situation had changed so quickly that they hadn't even had time to respond. Against a fifth-level vicious beast, what could they possibly do?

Now, Lin Ming was too busy to bother with the yellow-clothed youth anymore. If he let that fifth-level vicious beast break through the lines, the army would inevitably collapse. When that happened, Green Mulberry City would be overwhelmed in a single swoop.

He had to divert that vicious beast somehow. If Lin Ming faced that vicious beast head-on, he wasn't confident he could defeat it. Its strength was higher than his, and most importantly, the Heretical God Force that he had used to deal with Bi Luo had only been restored to about 70-80% capacity. If he used Thunder Annihilation now, he wouldn't be able to unleash its maximum power.

He had to stall for time.

Lin Ming turned and saw that the yellow-clothed youth had actually turned somewhat pale. Lin Ming laughed loudly and said, "Hm, what's wrong? Are you scared?"

The yellow-clothed youth was stunned for a moment before he furiously said, "You have the face to say I'm scared? Who do you think is the turtle from earlier? From the very start you went into hiding, and only just came back!"

Lin Ming didn't even seem to hear the yellow-clothed youth's taunt. He said, "You want to bet? Let's see who can persist against this fifth-level vicious beast for the longest, and who can damage it the most. The loser has to stay far away from Lan Yi, how about

it?”

The yellow-clothed youth smiled and said, “The loser has to stay far away from Lan Yi? Haha, who do you think you are? What a toad that wishes to eat swan meat. You think you qualify to make a bet with me?”

Lin Ming indifferently said, “It doesn’t matter who qualifies, only who dares and who dares not. If you don’t want to bet, then I’ll just go myself.”

After Lin Ming finished speaking, he ignored the yellow-clothed youth and rushed out with his spear!

The yellow-clothed youth’s complexion changed. This boy actually went by himself!?

He thought that Lin Ming was deliberately needling him, trying to provoke him into doing something stupid, and didn’t have the courage to go in. He didn’t think that Lin Ming would actually do it. He could feel Lan Yi’s eyes on him from behind. It seemed as if Lan Yi already had a good impression of this boy; how could he let him show off again?

The yellow-clothed youth instantly understood Lin Ming’s plan. A fifth-level vicious beast was strong, and this massive vicious beast in front of him truly did have a terrifying strength. But, it was slow. As long as he was careful and didn’t get too close, he wouldn’t be in any danger. This boy was actually thinking of making a bet against this fifth-level vicious beast so he could look

good, showing off his heroism and bravery but without placing himself in danger. This plan was truly well-crafted!

Thinking this, the yellow-clothed youth ground his teeth in anger; he had almost been fooled by this boy again!

He grasped his longsword and followed Lin Ming.

It only took a moment for Lin Ming and the yellow-clothed youth to cross five miles. After they approached, they saw just how massive the vicious beast was. It was over 200 feet tall, and its body was a dirty ash-gray all over. Its build resembled a giant octopus, and it was covered with dozens of thick and coarse tentacles.

“Sludge Monster.”

Lin Ming had seen the record of this vicious beast in the ancient story books within the Seven Profound Martial House. This beast lived in the darkest swamps of the Southern Wilderness, and was usually hidden within the thick mud of the swamps. It used its great tentacles to catch its prey. Once a martial artist was wrapped by its tentacles and dragged into the mud, it was only a matter of waiting to die.

Because the Sludge Monster stayed underground all year long, its main body was actually very slow, and an exceedingly good target!

Of course, that was only its main body. Its tentacles were

extremely fast. If one assumed that it was slow and thus posed no threat, that person was truly an idiot waiting to die.

Woosh!

As Lin Ming approached, a giant tentacle slashed towards him like a whip!

Although the Sludge Monster was strong, he was still able to block a single tentacle. He displayed his movement technique and dodged, running around the Sludge Monster.

He had to stall for time so he could completely restore the Heretical God Force, rather than engage in an epic struggle with the Sludge Monster.

Behind Lin Ming, the yellow-clothed youth rushed up just in time to see this scene. “He won’t even dare to attack a tentacle, and runs away from the Sludge Monster? This fellow still actually looks down on me, he is too outrageous!”

The yellow-clothed youth’s teeth itched with resentment. He was already fully assured that Lin Ming was acting, and putting on a fearless appearance so he could play a hero in front of Lan Yi, when the truth was, he was actually nothing.

“If you want to act, then I’ll follow you. Let’s see whose acting skills are better.” The yellow-clothed youth sneered. He had complete self-confidence in his strength. As for acting? Then that

would look at who was stronger. Whoever was stronger would be able to display an ever greater performance!

At this moment, the wind roared, and a thick tentacle slapped towards the yellow-clothed youth!

Seeing this, the yellow-clothed youth instantly became happy. Who the real deal was would naturally be seen.

“Sword Sweeping 1000 Soldiers!”

The youth’s entire body coursed with reckless sword energy. Sword Sweeping 1000 Soldiers was his strongest move. Once he used it, it was absolutely overwhelming, able to move even mountains!

Countless sword energies bombarded the thick tentacle, causing wounds several feet deep. Green slime splashed into the sky.

Aoo!

As the Sludge Monster felt pain, it reflexively shrunk its tentacle.

The yellow-clothed youth was very satisfied with the outcome of his attack. He didn’t even have time to turn back and smile at Lan Yi when, at that moment, his expression changed.

Hu hu hu hu!

A dozen tentacles swept towards the yellow-clothed youth like a wave from all sides. He was able to repel a single tentacle, but if so many came together, could he still force them back?

The Sludge Monster had already turned all of its attention to the yellow-clothed youth. To the Sludge Monster, that wound was simply nothing. It had dozens of tentacles, and even having a few cut off didn't matter to it. Not only would it not affect its combat strength, but those severed tentacles would even regenerate.

Besieged from all sides, the yellow-clothed youth was suddenly in danger.

In comparison, only a random tentacle occasionally attacked Lin Ming. Lin Ming would never use his spear to block it, only avoiding it with his movement technique.

“This damn fellow!”

The yellow-clothed youth felt as if he had been tricked again.

‘You want to make a fool of this father? No way! This father will not play with you!’

The tentacle monster's main body was moving very slowly. As long as the yellow-clothed youth was able to distance himself from its attack range, he would win the bet anyways. It simply wasn't worth entangling himself within all these weird tentacles.

Thinking this, the yellow-clothed youth turned around to run, but at this moment, he heard a true essence sound transmission in his ears, “Sorry, but it doesn’t seem you’ll be able to run. There’s a dreamland enchantment placed outside...”

“Mm? What!?”

The yellow-clothed youth was startled. He didn’t even have time to react when he felt a pain in his head; he had run into an invisible light screen!

Hold on, what was this!?

In a split-second, the yellow-clothed youth didn’t even time to think before several tentacles sliced towards him from behind.

Bang!

With an explosive sound, the yellow-clothed youth barely managed to avoid the strike as the tentacles pounded against the dreamland enchantment, causing the entire enchantment to shake. Lin Ming let out a cold breath, this was a truly strong attack!

The attack from a few tentacles had already caused the dreamland enchantment to vibrate so greatly. If that Sludge Monster smashed into it with all its strength, the dreamland enchantment might even rip apart!

Although Mu Qianyu had said that the dreamland enchantment could stop any attack from a martial artist below the Xiantian realm, the Sludge Monster was not a martial artist. Its attack power was much stronger than that of a martial artist of the same level.

The yellow-clothed youth's complexion completely changed, dreamland enchantment!?

How could a Sludge Monster release a dreamland enchantment?!? He naturally assumed that the one who laid down the dreamland enchantment was the Sludge Monster; he never thought that the one to do so was Lin Ming. In his opinion, Lin Ming didn't have the ability to lay down such a strong dreamland enchantment. Even if he had this ability, he still wouldn't close himself into it with the Sludge Monster.

“What do I do?”

The yellow-clothed youth panicked. There was nowhere to retreat to, the Sludge Monster had already locked onto him!

At this moment, Lin Ming was taking advantage of the Sludge Beast being attracted to the yellow-clothed youth. He clenched a medium-grade true essence stone, recovering his power as fast as he could. The Heretical God Force was quickly recovering.

Chapter 332 – Brilliance of Thunderfire

“Brothers, while we have two masters in front dealing with the tentacle monster, we will defend against the beast tide! As long as we can last, and the two masters can kill that strange tentacle beast, we will win!” A soldier shouted out from the battlefield.

However, the soldier’s words didn’t have much effect. Anyone could see that the yellow-clothed youth and Lin Ming were in a very disadvantageous position against the Sludge Monster. After the yellow-clothed youth had been injured at the very start, he was forced into danger. As for Lin Ming, he was worse than the yellow-clothed youth, dodging around the sides and not even attacking once.

In this situation, it was already good for the yellow-clothed youth and Lin Ming to not die against the Sludge Monster, let alone kill it.

Even so, none of the soldiers retreated. Behind them was Green Mulberry City, where their parents, wives, children, and everyone they else that they loved lived. If Green Mulberry City fell, everyone within would die.

How could they even think of retreating?

Rumble rumble rumble!

Tentacles lashed out like a flurry of whips. The yellow-clothed youth was desperately dodging all of the attacks; he didn’t even

have any strength to launch a full counterattack. Occasionally, he would gasp in exhaustion and slash out with several sword energies towards the dreamland enchantment.

However, the dreamland enchantment wasn't something the yellow-clothed youth could hope to break through; his sword couldn't even cause the barrier to shake.

“Boy called Lin, I... I've already... caught its attention, quick... hurry up and attack the Sludge Monster! Otherwise we'll both die here!”

The yellow-clothed youth was thinking of escaping and having Lin Ming attack to draw the attention of the Sludge Monster. However, Lin Ming remained unmoved.

Seeing Lin Ming turn a deaf ear to his pleas and not even help just a bit, the yellow-clothed youth became angry. He rushed over to Lin Ming, intending to drag him down too, but Lin Ming was just too speedy and nimble. There was no way the yellow-clothed youth could catch him.

“Ah!!!”

The yellow-clothed youth suddenly let out a miserable cry. His leg had rubbed against some corrosive mucus, and was immediately covered in blood.

A wound of this level wasn't enough to disable him, but it made

dodging even more difficult.

The yellow-clothed youth gritted his teeth and used this life and death crisis to push his body to its limits. But he knew that he simply wouldn't be able to keep this up for much longer.

At this time, Lin Ming had already poured a vast majority of the true essence in his body into the Heretical God Seed, constantly compressing it. The power of the Heretical God Seed had already been restored to 95%!

“Just hold on a bit longer.”

Lin Ming looked at the shaking enchantment barriers around him, his mind in complete concentration. Although the Sludge Monster was attacking the yellow-clothed youth, every time it did so, the attack would also splash onto the dreamland enchantment, causing an enormous impact upon it.

The Sludge Monster's strength was over 100,000 jins. There was no way that the dreamland enchantment would be able to resist this sort of force for much longer.

“It's almost ready.”

Lin Ming could feel that the total compression of the Heretical God Seed's power was about to be completed, but the dreamland enchantment wouldn't be able to last much longer.

The dreamland enchantment had a great practical value for Lin Ming, he didn't want to lose it like this. Just as the dreamland enchantment reached its limit, at that moment, Lin Ming waved his hand and directly stored the Dreamland Pearl away.

At this time, the Heretical God Force was fully saturated!

Peng!

The yellow-clothed youth was slapped by the Sludge Monster's tentacle. He flew backwards, spitting blood, no different than a broken ragdoll.

As the yellow-clothed youth flew back, spitting blood, the air whistling in his ears, he didn't need to look to see that the tentacles were attacking him once again. At this critical moment, the yellow-clothed youth stirred up all of the remaining strength he had, completely willing himself up with his survival instincts, fighting back the intense pain in his organs, and then rushing forwards, barely escaping the fatal blow.

He desperately shouted at Lin Ming, "If... I... if I die, then you'll die an even worse death! Hurry up and attack its eye... its weakness! Otherwise... we'll all die!"

In the turbulent wind, the yellow-clothed youth's voice was barely audible, cut off again and again. In truth, he didn't know the weakness of the Sludge Monster. Perhaps the Sludge Monster didn't even have a weakness. The yellow-clothed youth only said this because he wanted to lure Lin Ming in to attack the Sludge

Monster's eye, angering it.

However, the yellow-clothed youth also knew that there was no way a timid and cowardly fellow like Lin Ming would ever attack.

But he didn't expect to see Lin Ming's spear and entire body flashing with bright sparks of thunder and flame, incomparably radiant.

Seeing this, the yellow-clothed youth was stunned, and then started chuckling to himself. This boy was finally fooled!

It seemed that the boy called Lin was finally making his move, and not only that, but it looked like his ultimate strike. With that boy as a diversion, the yellow-clothed youth might be able to survive. A moment ago, he had felt the dreamland enchantment finally vanish, or he would have hit the barrier.

As the dream world enchantment vanished, the boy called Lin impulsively rushed towards the Sludge Monster to launch his attack. This attack would inevitably attract the Sludge Monster towards him.

This was the best chance he would have to escape. The yellow-clothed youth could only hope that Lin Ming's attack was strong enough to provoke the Sludge Monster. He would have thanked Lin Ming in gratitude for giving him this opportunity to escape, but it would have been nothing but a joke. If it wasn't for Lin Ming, how would he ever have been caught in this dangerous situation? He looked forward to seeing Lin Ming die under the

Sludge Monster's strike.

The yellow-clothed youth withstood the pain and displayed his highest movement technique to escape. This time, the only thing that mattered to him was escaping all of this. What Green Mulberry City? He didn't care at all about the soldiers' lives, and even Lan Yi's life was nothing compared to this.

Wind whistled. Lin Ming opened up the Heretical God Force, the Thunder Soul and Flame Essence in his body intensely trembling.

Although everyone could see that Lin Ming was about to launch his attack, no one besides him knew just how terrifying the power of this strike would be.

True essence crazily flooded into the Heretical God Seed. The compressed power of thunder and fire was at its limits, like a dam that was about to burst open. With the Purple Comet Spear in his hand, the power of thunder and fire was enhanced to the extreme.

Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder!

Earthcore Crimson Flame!

With the Thunder Soul and Flame Essence as its source, this would be the strongest Thunderfire Annihilation. Even if Lin Ming opened up the Heretical God Force, it would be exceedingly difficult to control its power.

The spearpoint faced out. Lin Ming's entire body was twined with arcs of lightning and wreaths of fire; he directly shot towards the Sludge Monster like a blazing meteor!

Time seemed to slow down. The waving tentacles, the shouts of the soldiers, the roar of the beasts, all of this disappeared, leaving only the terrifying reverberations of thunder and fire echoing in the air.

Peng! Peng!

Two tentacles swiped at Lin Ming. But, they were instantly pierced through by Lin Ming and his spear! The green corrosive mucus was instantly burnt to nothing by the thick power of thunder and fire in the air. Lin Ming rushed towards the Sludge Monster, overwhelming, unstoppable!

Thunderfire Annihilation!

Bang—!

An ultimate power broke forth. In the night sky, it was like a purple sun had dawned. A large fissure appeared in the Sludge Monster, a massive amount of blood and viscous green liquid flowing out.

Lin Ming carried on his slaughter straight through, penetrating the Sludge Monster's body and rushing out the other side, a shower of green blood appearing in his wake!

“Houu—aa—!”

A gorgeous and shining pillar of flame and thunder pierced into the sky; the Sludge Monster roared in pain.

Flames lit the entire night sky. Countless vicious beasts were charred alive by the fire, there were innumerable casualties as vicious beasts fell to the floor.

Even the nearby yellow-clothed youth almost died. The flames' shock wave smashed into him, sending him tumbling onto the floor, his hair and clothes burnt.

At this time, he couldn't care about these things. He could only look at that raging inferno with incredulity, feeling the life-force of the Sludge Monster weakening, his heart shaking.

The Sludge Monster died?

How... what... just what had happened?

The Sludge Monster seemed to be the leader of the second tide of vicious beasts. As its corpse burnt within the fire, all of the vicious beasts stopped as if they had lost all of their courage, and stopped attacking.

Every vicious beast turned towards the Sludge Monster that was

wrapped in a cloak of flame. Then, after several breaths of time, they began to retreat like an ebbing tide, running away from Green Mulberry City.

Hualalala...

Soon, all of the vicious beasts on the battlefield retreated, leaving behind only corpses.

The vicious beasts retreated?

All of Green Mulberry City's soldiers, standing among mounds of flesh and blood, their bodies exhausted and barely able to stand, could hardly believe as they watched the vicious beasts retreat.

That dreadful inferno that pierced through the heavens seemed to cast a warmth on their bodies, heating up their cold spirits.

We won?

No one could believe this as they stared at the giant hill that was the Sludge Monster. That invincible Sludge Monster had actually been killed by Lin Ming in one move.

“We won!”

“The vicious beasts have retreated!”

After a moment of silence, all of the soldiers burst out in thunderous cheers. Many people embraced each other in excitement, hot tears streaking down their faces. The tears ran down faces that were matted with dust and blood, leaving behind clear traces.

These soldiers were different from Lin Ming. After all, they were only mortal. If Green Mulberry City could not be defended, Lin Ming could freely retreat. But as for them, they did not have such a luxury. During this war, the soldiers who came were already prepared to die on this battlefield.

The vicious beast tide seemed endless. They were already at their limits, but then the Sludge Monster had appeared, and the vicious beasts grew increasingly violent, nearly overwhelming their hearts.

However, against everyone's expectations, the Sludge Monster had been utterly destroyed by Lin Ming in a single strike. After the amazing reversal that followed, they had won!

.....

Beside the Sludge Monster, Lin Ming knelt on the floor, propping himself up with his spear. His energy consumption had been massive; this single blow had exhausted a full 60% of his true essence.

With his current strength, even though he had opened the Heretical God Force and also had the increased power of the Purple

Comet Spear, he couldn't use the full strength of Thunderfire Annihilation. He was just barely able to use 70-80% of its strength. Even so, it had still drained him of so much energy.

As Lin Ming looked at the giant pyre of flames, he took a deep breath, and pulled out a pill from his spatial ring, eating it to help restore his true essence. Although it sounded terrifying that he had killed the Sludge Monster in a single blow, this didn't mean that Lin Ming had strength equal to a sect's peak Houtian martial artist.

The Sludge Monster had a massive body, and it was also slow. In the end, it couldn't avoid attacks and became an easy target.

Lin Ming's most outstanding aspect was his attack power. Once he used Thunderfire Annihilation, its power was truly earth-shattering. But, when facing a top Houtian martial artist like Qin Ziya, he might not have the chance to do so.

Chapter 333 – Lan Yi's Request

The flames burned brightly. Lin Ming carried the Purple Comet Spear and walked towards the flames. With a wave of his hand, an invisible energy rushed forth, dividing the flames and revealing a passageway.

The Sludge Monster had already stopped struggling. There were only a few tentacles that were still roasting in the fiery heat, curling up as they burnt to ash.

With a single spear, Lin Ming slashed apart the Sludge Monster, walking directly into its body.

Chi chi chi!

Green mucus fell like rain, but it was all burnt away by flames.

A moment later, Lin Ming took out a fist-sized inner core pearl from the Sludge monster, placing it into a spatial ring.

All vicious beasts above the fourth-level had core pearls within them. Whether it was for alchemy or for countering poisons, the Sludge Monster's core pearl would be an extremely good material. Naturally, Lin Ming wouldn't leave it.

The Sludge Monster's sinews were also a good material. But the Sludge Monster had been slashed apart by Lin Ming, and had also been charred black. These sinews no longer had any value.

The flames separated into a path as Lin Ming carried his Purple Comet Spear and walked out from the blazing inferno, his spearpoint leading the way. At this time, his hair was loose, and he was covered in residual arcs of purple lightning and flame. At this moment, he looked like a peerless demon god.

The person closest to Lin Ming was the yellow-clothed youth from the Moon Seizing Sect. The yellow clothed-youth was slumped on the ground, exhausted. As he watched Lin Ming emerge from the fire, his lips twitched, and his eyes were blank like he had lost his soul.

He thought that Lin Ming was inviting death with that spear of his, but he never imagined that a single blow was able to kill the Sludge Monster...

This was a fifth-level vicious beast, whose strength was comparable to a peak Houtian martial artist. As for Lin Ming, his cultivation was only at the mere middle Pulse Condensation period!

Who was he?

The yellow-clothed youth was very clear just how terrifying it was to have this strength at this cultivation, and at such a young age!

It was impossible for him to be unknown.

At this moment, he heard a rallying cry spread through the entire army, as if it were an endless tide.

“Long live Hero Lin!”

“Long live Hero Lin!”

“Long live Hero Lin!”

“Long live Hero Lin!”

To an ordinary soldier, Lin Ming was their benefactor and also their savior. Without Lin Ming, not only would they have died, but all their family that stood behind them would have been turned to bones by the vicious beast tide.

Surname Lin... His surname was Lin...

A 16 year old genius surnamed Lin... a name suddenly popped up in the yellow-clothed youth's heart, causing him to be completely petrified. He sat on the ground like a statue, watching as Lin Ming walked past him...

The cheers continued. Lin Ming looked in the distance to see that the soldiers were all bloodied, but they were cheering in high spirits, and his mood became complex.

In this battle, the ones that had the greatest impact were the masters. But, if these soldiers hadn't used their own bodies to create a wall of flesh and blood to block off the beast tide, then no matter how strong Lin Ming was, or how many vicious beast he killed, they would have broken into Green Mulberry City and killed innocents.

In this fight, these ordinary soldiers had paid the greatest cost, but the cheers and accolades they received were the least.

He even saw a soldier who had lost his arm in battle. After a simple wrap to staunch the bleeding, this soldier used all of his weary strength to raise his right arm, saluting Lin Ming.

At this moment, Lin Ming's heart suddenly felt heavy. This was a war of mortals. In an army that was once 10,000 strong, there were now only a few thousand left. To the soldiers, being able to survive, or knowing that their families were safe, was already the best possible result.

Thinking of the culprit that was behind this entire farce – the South Sea Demon Region, Lin Ming's mind and heart filled with waves of surging hatred.

To a lofty fifth-grade sect, the lives of mortals were no different than ants.

In order to swallow Divine Phoenix Island and the South Horizon Region, and to warn the 19 third-grade sects, the South Sea Demon Region didn't hesitate for a second before setting off a terrifying

beast tide that embroiled the entire Divine Phoenix Province. Because of their actions, death reigned everywhere, and countless innocent lives were lost.

Lin Ming walked towards the army camp and hadn't even arrived when he was swarmed by people. They were all being led by high level people of Green Mulberry City such as Lin Wanshan and Zhuang Fan.

That vivid image of Lin Ming killing the Sludge Monster with a single strike of his spear could be described as a miracle. The monster was the size of a hill, but was stabbed to death with a single move. Purple lightning and roaring flames had impacted the heavens; this had left a greatly humbling impact upon everyone watching.

The Salt Clan's Shi Linkai had a very ruddy complexion, red with excitement. He laughed loudly and said, "Hero Lin, you are truly a war god reincarnate!"

He was ready to let out some more praise, when he found that something didn't seem right about Lin Ming's condition.

"Hero Lin, is everything alright?"

Lin Ming waved his hand and said, "I'm good. I just need to rest for a moment."

Lin Ming had only consumed too much energy; it wasn't because

he was injured by the Sludge Monster. The Sludge Monster had a great deal of corrosive mucus in its body, but most of it was burnt away by the power of thunder and fire. As for the rest, it wasn't able to melt through Lin Ming's protective true essence.

At this time, a white-clothed girl came out from the crowd. Her delicate red lips parted, and she carefully called out, "Sir Lin."

This girl was Lan Yi. She had seen all she needed in that brief moment to confirm that this was Lin Ming. Within all of the talents of the 19 third-grade sects, who could display this level of power besides Lin Ming?

In fact, according to Lan Yi's impression, Lin Ming should not have had this amount of terrifying combat strength. This was not strength that a Pulse Condensation period martial artist should have. In fact, there were even certain elders within the Moon Seizing Sect that couldn't match up. The Moon Seizing Sect was a relatively weak and small sect, and some of the outer court elders were only at the peak Houtian realm. Their attack power would never reach this level.

For a 16 year to have attack power that compared favorably to an outer court elder of the Moon Seizing Sect... Lin Ming truly deserved his title as the top talent and young genius within the 19 third-grade sects.

Lan Yi never expected that she would meet Lin Ming in such a remote mortal city. Naturally, she would not miss this rare opportunity.

Lin Ming looked up at Lan Yi, “What’s the matter?”

At this point, Lin Ming was able to confirm that Lan Yi had recognized him. The reason she repeatedly approached him must be because she had some matter to discuss.

“Sir Lin, this is a Blue Lotus Pill, it can help you recover your strength.” As Lan Yi spoke, she took out a small bottle from her spatial ring. A rich aroma emitted from the pill – it was indeed a top-grade pill.

“I don’t need it.” Lin Ming waved, “I already have pills. If Miss Lan has any matters to discuss, please speak frankly.”

“This...”

For a moment, Lan Yi seemed somewhat embarrassed. To brazenly and openly ask others for help was quite difficult.

At this point, Shi Linkai also revealed a mischievous smile, his eyes lighting up with a ‘hehe’ expression. He gave Lin Ming a meaningful glance, silently saying ‘Brother, you are very fierce!’, and quickly excused himself and left.

Obviously, to Shi Linkai, Lan Yi was infatuated with Lin Ming. To him, this was a completely normal matter. After all, beautiful women loved heroes, the two were of a similar age, and Lin Ming had an attractive aura to him.

As Shi Linkai thought that he was being clever, this caused Lan Yi to be even more embarrassed. She coughed and said, “Sir Lin, I would like to request a favor, may I speak with you alone?”

“Alright, let’s go to the army compound.” Lin Ming also wanted to understand how the Moon Seizing Sect was attacked, so he didn’t reject her.

Chapter 334 – Moon Seizing Sect's Hidden Treasures

Seeing Lin Ming and Lan Yi's departing forms, Zhuang Fan glanced at Lin Wanshan and said, "Old Lin, Lin Ming is 16 this year isn't he?"

"Mm... it's about time for engagement."

According to the traditions of Sky Fortune Kingdom, once a man reached 16 years of age and became an adult, he could be engaged, and once he reached 18 years of age, he could get married.

But a martial artist was fundamentally different. It wasn't strange for a Xiantian realm martial artist to not be married even at 100 years of age. Lin Wanshan didn't know what sort of plans Lin Ming had for marriage, or if he even planned to. With a single word from Lin Wanshan, he could decide who a common Lin Family junior would have to marry. If they wanted to marry who they wanted, they would have to leave the family.

But as for something so important as Lin Ming's marriage, that was something that Lin Wanshan had absolutely no power to influence. It would all be up to Lin Ming's own choice.

Zhuang Fan sighed, then shook his head. He casually spoke a few words regarding Lin Ming's age of engagement, but Lin Ming was destined to never marry into their Zhuang Family as a son-in-law. Their Zhuang Family simply couldn't produce a daughter that was able to match up to Lin Ming. He guessed that every noble family

in Sky Fortune City already had their eyes on him. As long as Lin Ming revealed the slightest bit of interest, all of the noble families would probably line up their daughters, waiting in line to deliver them up to Lin Ming, even willing to send them off as concubines.

.....

Lin Ming's tent was in the center of the army camp. The arrangements inside were very simple, but actually very comfortable. There was a sturdy wooden cot that was covered with clean cotton sheets. Because it was pressed a bit too much, it was a little hard to sit on.

"Sit." Lin Ming indicated the wooden cot as he spoke to Lan Yi.

"Sir Lin, my name is Zhou Xinyu. The name of Lan Yi was only my childhood nickname..." The reason that Lan Yi hadn't given her true name was because she wanted to conceal her identity. But now that she was requesting something from Lin Ming, she naturally had to be honest in her intentions.

"Zhou Xinyu..." Lin Ming thought back and remembered that in Divine Phoenix Island's joint talent training program, there was a girl with this name. She was one of the 50 human-step talents. "Miss Zhou is a disciple of the Moon Seizing Sect?"

Zhou Xinyu hesitated for a moment, then nodded. There was no longer any reason to hide her identity, and this was easily found out.

“I’m sorry, but could Miss Zhou tell me who destroyed the Moon Seizing Sect?” Lin Ming tried to make his tone as gentle as possible as he poured a pot of tea, in order to not aggravate her wounds.

As the topic of her sect’s destruction was brought up, a look of hatred mingled with sorrow in Zhou Xinyu’s eyes. She still vividly recalled that bloody day when her master had died a tragic death.

“They were all Revolving Core masters. Seven of them in total.” Zhou Xinyu spat out between clenched teeth.

Within the entire Moon Seizing Sect, only their Highest Elder had barely managed to break through to the Revolving Core realm. Even with several dozens of Xiantian masters combined together, none of them could block the slaughtering rampage of seven Revolving Core powerhouses – there was even one at the middle Revolving Core stage.

Lin Ming’s heart sank. With this extermination line-up, even the Seven Profound Valleys would face certain doom. Even Peacock Mountain and Falling Cloud Sect would suffer serious losses.

He let out a heavy breath and then continued, “And what matter does Miss Zhou have to discuss with me?”

“Mm... that is, I... I want to join Divine Phoenix Island. I... would like to ask that Sir Lin recommend me, if possible. I would like to have a chance to study Divine Phoenix Island’s core cultivation methods. I would be very grateful.” Zhou Xinyu started out a bit embarrassed, but afterwards just spoke her request in one go. She

had originally planned to befriend Lin Ming and then slowly lay down her request, but now that the situation has become like this, there was no point in beating around the bush.

“You want to study the core cultivation methods?” Lin Ming furrowed his eyebrows. If it was simply a recommendation, then Lin Ming would easily be able to help. With Zhou Xinyu’s talent, it wouldn’t be too difficult to join Divine Phoenix Island.

However, if he wanted to recommend her to study the core cultivation methods, then that was something he wouldn’t be able to do.

Divine Phoenix Island had two main core cultivation method manuals, ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ as well as ‘Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code’. These were the both legacies left behind by the ancient Phoenix Clan, they were incomparably precious.

These two cultivation methods were normally only passed down to core disciples. Ordinary disciples could only study the most superficial knowledge of them. Even Lin Ming, who hadn’t yet officially joined Divine Phoenix Island, was only taught the first layer of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. Not only that, but Lin Ming had also made a pledge on his heart of martial arts that he wouldn’t leak out this cultivation method.

This was because there were too many profound secrets contained within the, ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ as well as ‘Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code’. As the legacies of the ancient Phoenix Clan, it was said that if one

managed to cultivate them to the highest realm, one's body would be like a phoenix, and they would be able to rebirth in a nirvana of flames, immortal and indestructible.

Such a precious ancient legacy was enough to cause many powerhouses to covet it, even with all the flaws they had.

The 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' and 'Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code' were difficult to cultivate if one didn't have the bloodline of the Vermillion Bird or Blue Luan. Of course, this didn't mean that one couldn't cultivate it entirely. In the history of Divine Phoenix Island, there was once a demonic man who cultivated fire-attribute cultivation methods, and had stolen away the Saintess of Divine Phoenix Island to plunder her Primordial Yin, so that he could double cultivate the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle'. Like this, a catastrophe was brought down upon Divine Phoenix Island.

But Divine Phoenix Island had learned from this grave mistake. From that point on, they had strictly controlled these secrets.

"I apologize, I cannot help you." Lin Ming said, directly rejecting Lan Yi. "The core cultivation methods of Divine Phoenix Island are only passed down to the core disciples. If you could become a core disciple, then you don't need my help to do so."

Zhou Xinyu was stunned, and then her entire complexion was colored with disappointment. Core disciple... with her talent, the most she could be was an outer court disciple. There was no way she could compete against the inner court disciples, much less a core disciple.

Thinking of the vengeance she needed to take for her master and her sect, Zhou Xinyu absentmindedly asked, “Divine Phoenix Island will not pass on the core cultivation methods to inner court disciples?”

Lin Ming shook his head, “An inner court disciple can only learn the first few layers of the core cultivation methods. Divine Phoenix Island is very strict in the management of their core cultivation methods. Sorry, but I simply cannot help you...”

“Sir Lin... I...” Zhou Xinyu had a begging expression, but the words she wanted to say were caught in her throat. Her original intent was to produce a few Heaven Opening Pills as a reward for Lin Ming’s help.

But now it appeared that Heaven Opening Pills were useless. Lin Ming wasn’t lacking in Heaven Opening Pills. According to what Zhou Xinyu had heard, Lin Ming had already obtained three Heaven Opening Pills. Once Lin Ming stepped into the Houtian realm, there would probably be more.

A core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island probably received similar treatment to Lin Ming. To use a few Heaven Opening Pills in exchange for the treatment of a core disciple was simply too naïve.

Zhou Xinyu was aware that with her own talent, the most she could achieve would be becoming an inner court disciple; there was no way she would ever be able to learn the full core cultivation method manuals and enter into the Revolving Core realm. Divine

Phoenix Island was too strong, a core disciple had a high chance of entering the Revolving Core realm, otherwise, this Revolving Core realm would be too worthless.

Did she really have to put out that...

If she gave it to Mu Qianyu, she might be able to trade it for a core disciple position. But... the price was too steep.

After the Moon Seizing Sect was destroyed, the treasure that they left behind was the hope of her master, as well as the hope for the future revival of the Moon Seizing Sect.

Without it, even if she became a core disciple and was able to learn the core cultivation methods, it would be too difficult to step into the Revolving Core realm.

But if she had it, then she wouldn't be able to reach the Revolving Core realm as she wouldn't have a high-grade cultivation method. If she didn't reach the Revolving Core realm, she wouldn't have the qualifications to avenge her master or rebuild the Moon Seizing Sect.

As Zhou Xinyu thought of this, her mind was torn...

"I've disturbed Sir Lin, excuse me." Zhou Xinyu barely smiled, and then quietly left the tent.

As she left, Lin Ming saw her desolate back, and he suddenly

sighed with emotion. He hesitated for a moment, then said, “I will bring this up with Divine Phoenix Island’s Miss Mu. However, what she does will depend on her.

Zhou Xinyu was happy. She hurriedly thanked Lin Ming and said, “Thank you Sir Lin, I will engrave this kindness within my mind.”

After Zhou Xinyu profusely thank him, she finally left. Lin Ming could only shake his head. The road of a martial artist was fraught with hardships and emotions. Talents such as Zhou Xinyu may seem like fairy maidens to a common mortal, but if they truly wished to reach the Revolving Core realm, they had to pay a great cost.

In order for a common martial artist to earn a few resources, they had to venture through lands filled with vicious beasts and risk their lives to hunt for precious materials. These materials were also what young and beautiful girls sought from the Seven Profound Valleys’ Acacia Faction. In order to reach the Pulse Condensation period and extend their lives, they would exchange their own virginity for the longer-lasting youth. These sect talents were the envy of countless others, in order to search for lucky opportunities, they would enter into dangerous lands and possibly die...

The road of martial artists seemed bright and attractive, but once one stepped onto it, it was full of thorns and perils. If one fell off for any reason, there was no more hope for them.

Zhou Xinyu had a wish and obsession to revive her sect and

avenge her master. This obsession was truly worthy of Lin Ming's pity and respect. However, at most, Lin Ming would only be able to mention this subject to Mu Qianyu; he couldn't help her in any substantial way.

No longer thinking about these things, Lin Ming closed the tent curtains and then took out a spatial ring. This spatial ring was left behind by Bi Luo. After Lin Ming killed Bi Luo, he had only taken the spatial ring because he was in a hurry to return to the battlefield; he hadn't had time to investigate what was inside.

Bi Luo had a limited status within the Seven Profound Valleys. Lin Ming didn't have much hope that there would be anything within that was too valuable. He started with the mindset that it would be like looking for meat in a mosquito leg, and he began to remove the objects inside one at a time.

There were several medium-grade human-step treasures, as well as a high-grade human-step treasure sword and flexible armor. There were several bottles of high-grade pills for a Houtian realm martial artist to increase their cultivation, over 1000 true essence stones, and several jade slips.

There was no need to look at treasures like the flexible armor. To Lin Ming, these treasures were things he could just give away. As for the high-grade cultivation pills, those were barely up to standards. They were probably gifted by Ouyang Boyan, so it would be useful to keep them. As for the 1000 true essences tones, they were better than nothing.

Afterwards, Lin Ming picked up the jade slips and began to

casually glance through them. Suddenly, he was surprised. Mm? There was a medium-grade earth-step auxiliary secret skill jade slip?

To a sect, core secret skills were the unique legacies of those sects. For instance, Divine Phoenix Island's 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle', and the Acacia Faction's 'Divine Acacia Power' had no grade.

But there were some secret skills that were spread out and thus obtained a grade. A medium-grade earth-step cultivation method jade slip was equal to a top medium-grade earth-step treasure in value.

Initially when Lin Ming had learned the 'Body Tearing Bone Shattering Fist', that had only been an incomplete medium-grade earth-step martial skill. But, the abstract principles found within were extremely profound. Although a medium-grade earth-step auxiliary secret skill was just a bit lower in value, it was more than enough to exchange for two Heaven Opening Pills.

"This Bi Luo, he was actually thinking of trade for two Heaven Opening Pills with this secret skill after he reached peak Houtian, and then breaking through to the Xiantian realm! How ambitious..."

Lin Ming didn't think that Bi Luo's treasure trove was so deep that it would have such a precious treasure.

As Lin Ming swept through the contents of the cultivation

method, his heart immediately stirred. This was a set of appearance changing and concealment methods!

No wonder Bi Luo's appearance changing technique and concealment skill had been so superb!

Chapter 335 – Concealment Technique

Lin Ming hadn't been able to see through Bi Luo's appearance changing technique.

When Bi Luo had lured Lin Ming into a trap by telling him of the Seraphic Pond Mountain, whether it was temperament, appearance, or breath, all of those were indistinguishable from the true Qin Ziya. Even though Lin Ming felt that something was strange during that time, he was still tricked. This was because Bi Luo's appearance changing technique was simply too perfect.

At that time, Lin Ming thought that he couldn't see through Bi Luo's disguise because their strength was too far apart. But now, Bi Luo had changed into an old man, and Lin Ming's strength was beyond Bi Luo's. Still, even though he had correctly guessed Bi Luo's identity, even though he widened his eyes and looked, releasing his entire perception, he still didn't manage to see a single flaw in Bi Luo's appearance changing technique. Lin Ming had to admit that Bi Luo's disguise was too clever.

Moreover, Lin Ming cultivated the 'Overbearing Soul Tactic', so his soul force and perception were far beyond that of a martial artist at the same level. Afterwards, he had comprehended the Samsara martial intent and his perception had taken another step forwards. Even so, he was completely powerless to see through Bi Luo's appearance changing technique.

Lin Ming had thought that this sort of appearance changing technique came from the Mirage Faction, and was a technique that was known by all the disciples of the Mirage Faction.

But now that he thought of it some more, during the Total Faction Martial Meeting when he had fought the Mirage Faction core disciple Bi Tinghua, he had seen through his illusions. It was impossible for every disciple of the Mirage Faction to be as fierce as Bi Luo, otherwise it would simply be too absurd.

Not only was Bi Luo skilled in appearance changing techniques, but he was also skilled in concealment techniques. Usually, a martial artist had to reach the Xiantian realm and achieve the state of returning to one's true origin in order to hide their cultivation. Bi Luo was still short of this, but he could hide in the army so that Lin Ming couldn't discover where he was. Even after Lin Ming had rushed deep into the tide of vicious beasts, he hadn't even noticed Bi Luo until the very last moment before he was attacked.

Lin Ming sighed, this auxiliary secret skill was just far too formidable. He had no idea where Bi Luo managed to obtain it, but it was probably at some ancient site. If he exchanged it at the Seven Profound Valleys, he would probably be able to obtain several Heaven Opening Pills, more than enough to help him reach the Xiantian realm. The reason that Bi Luo hadn't exchanged it immediately was most likely because he was trying to keep a low profile. After all, his cultivation was insufficient and he wouldn't be able to immediately swallow the Heaven Opening Pills. Once it was revealed that he had so many Heaven Opening Pills on his body, it was possible he would suffer a catastrophe when others coveted them.

Bi Luo's plan was to wait until he reached the peak Houtian realm, and then exchange the secret skill with the Seven Profound Valleys for the Heaven Opening Pills as soon as possible. If Bi Luo

hadn't run into Lin Ming, then he might have actually reached the Xiantian realm.

Lin Ming began to read the jade slip. The more he read, the more impressed he was. Not only was the concealment method able to hide cultivation and true essence fluctuations, but it could also change one's personal appearance. The only flaw of the otherwise perfect technique was that it couldn't hide one's killing intent; it was when Bi Luo had released a faint killing intent that he was found out by Lin Ming.

As for Bi Luo's appearance and true essence fluctuations, he had hidden them very well. From beginning to end, there wasn't even the slightest flaw.

This sort of secret skill didn't have any combat strength, but it was very practical for Lin Ming.

There was no need to mention how broad and useful an appearance changing technique was, but in conjunction with the concealment technique, it could be used in sneak attacks and could also be useful in escaping.

Lin Ming was thinking of immediately studying this secret skill, but a flame suddenly lit in front of him; this was a sound transmitting talisman from Qin Ziya.

The message was very simple. Qin Ziya informed Lin Ming that early the next morning he would be arriving at Green Mulberry City with several masters, including Qin Xingxuan and Mister

Muyi.

“Martial House Master Qin is coming?”

Lin Ming was surprised. He didn't think that even before the support from the Seven Profound Valleys arrived, Qin Ziya would come first.

From the eruption of the beast tide until now, it had only been two days and two nights. Qin Ziya needed to arrange sending the lower rank disciples of the Seven Profound Martial House to a safe city, and then also inventory the property and resources and pack up. In addition to the time it took to fly here, it was already a very fast pace.

Although Qin Ziya did this because he owed Lin Ming a favor, Lin Ming was still very grateful.

“Martial House Master Qin should have already obtained a Heaven Opening Pill, but he shouldn't have had time to eat it yet. Once he takes the Heaven Opening Pill, he will need to go into seclusion for a short period of time. The chances of Martial House Master Qin breaking through to the Xiantian realm are gigantic. Once he does, he will become a Seven Profound Valleys elder. Once he arrives tomorrow morning, the safety of the city will be set!”

‘So, there are finally some matters which I don't have to be scrupulous about. I guess it's time to clear out some trash...’

Thinking this, Lin Ming's figure disappeared from his tent.

.....

At this time, in the army commander's tent, Zhu Ping still hadn't taken off his armor. He was sitting at the table, looking at the casualty report in his hands. But as he glanced at the report, Zhu Ping's thoughts were in chaos; he didn't even know what was written on that report.

One matter was very clear. That master that Ouyang Boyan sent had died, killed at the hands of Lin Ming!

This was a late Houtian master from a sect, yet he was still killed by Lin Ming?

Zhu Ping's hands began to sweat. His treasure sword was on the table, but this sword wasn't even able to give him the slightest sense of security.

Before now, he had heard that Sky Fortune Kingdom's Royal Family took orders from the Seven Profound Valleys. But to Zhu Ping, the Seven Profound Valleys was an extremely remote existence. No matter how terrifying its influence was, or how strong its disciples were, Zhu Ping had no clear understanding.

With the backing of a master, in addition to the many masters of the army, he hadn't even placed Lin Ming's strength in his eyes. He had subconsciously looked down on Lin Ming, thinking of him

as a snotty nosed brat that had just managed to run into a great stroke of luck. He was thinking of killing him in the chaos and saving the Zhu Family.

However, now it seemed that his idea was just laughably absurd. This night, he had seen Lin Ming kill a Sludge Monster with a single spear strike, letting loose an aura that was like a peerlessly evil demonic god. Seeing this had caused all of Zhu Ping's courage to shatter into tiny pieces.

The youth that he tried to have killed actually turned out to be such a terrible demon.

Now, if Zhu Ping looked at Lin Ming, all he felt was a fearful pressure that made his heart sink. This was the feeling of one's fate being completely in the hands of another.

Zhu Ping had even thought of escaping this night. But Green Mulberry City was surrounded by vicious beasts all around – where would he be able to run to?

“It shouldn't matter, at most he only suspects me, there is no evidence. Also, I'm the commander of the army. If he kills me, the morale of the troops will falter and they'll fall into chaos...”

Zhu Ping thought aloud, comforting himself. Before now, he had even thought of an excuse to absolve himself of any guilt.

Although he didn't expect that Lin Ming trusted him, Zhu Ping

was sure that Lin Ming only had some speculative thoughts, and no true proof. Although he was just a mere mortal, he was still the commander of Green Mulberry City's garrison troops. During this beast tide, he couldn't be killed on a whim.

Thinking this, Zhu Ping calmed down. He took up the report in his hand and began to review it with a red ink brush.

The higher the position one was in, the more drunk they were on power, and the more they latched onto authority. They feared losing it and dying, especially someone as young as Zhu Ping. He was only 40 years old, and had broken through to the Pulse Condensation period with his own strength. He had an excellent future, and over a hundred years of life still to enjoy.

Like this, how could he not fear death?

He took a deep breath, then began to write. Because he was somewhat distraught, his handwriting was crooked from his trembling hands.

At this moment, a nightmarish voice abruptly sounded out, "Army Commander Zhu, you seem a bit cold?"

"Ahh!"

Zhu Ping reflexively recoiled, throwing away the red ink brush in his hands like he had been bitten by a snake. He looked before the table, and saw a black-clothed youth standing there like a demon.

This was Lin Ming!

“Young... Young Hero Lin.” Zhu Ping’s throat was dry, his complexion pale. He reluctantly managed to compose himself, and calmly said, “Young... Young Hero Lin visits so late at night, I welcome you.”

Lin Ming casually sat in a chair, and flatly said, “Zhu Ping, there’s no need to put on an act or play games with me. I’ll ask you now, how many people does Ouyang Boyan have in Green Mulberry City?”

“Ouyang... Ouyang Boyan? The Seven Profound Valleys elder, Mister Ouyang? Young... Young Hero Lin, I am such an unimportant person, how could I possibly know anything about Mister Ouyang’s matters?” Zhu Ping forced out with a bitter smile.

“Really?” Lin Ming sneered. He hadn’t had any hopes that Zhu Ping would actually know Ouyang Boyan’s plans.

“Well....” Lin Ming stretched out a finger, and lightning crackled on his fingertip, “You can die now.”

Zhu Ping suddenly stiffened, his face filled with fear. He was preparing to justify himself and give out some excuses, “Wait... wait! Young Hero Lin, I...”

Pu!

A purple light directly pierced Zhu Ping's throat. Zhu Ping's frightened eyes opened wide, as if he couldn't believe this reality.

His throat broken, blood began to crazily spurt out. Zhu Ping futilely held onto his throat as if he was trying to block the blood from oozing out.

Zhu Ping never thought that as the commander of Green Mulberry City's garrison army, a viscount of Sky Fortune Kingdom, as well as a Pulse Condensation period martial artist and an important character of Green Mulberry City's Zhu Family, he would actually be sentenced to death here without even a trial.

When Lin Ming killed Zhu Ping, he had first laid down the dreamland enchantment so that he wouldn't disturb anyone. It wasn't that he was afraid of anyone. With his status and power, he only needed to find a casual reason to take Zhu Ping's life, and no one would have been able to dispute him.

The reason that he had let Zhu Ping live up to this point was because Zhu Ping was the commander of Green Mulberry City's 10,000 garrison troops. During the invasion of the beast tide, it was impossible for Lin Ming to kill the commander. But now that Qin Ziya was about to arrive and the situation would soon be decided, keeping someone like Zhu Ping around was pointless.

The reason that he laid down the dreamland enchantment was that he didn't want to alarm the soldiers and cause the morale of the troops to be unstable. Once tomorrow arrived and Qin Ziya came, everything would be fine.

Lin Ming turned Zhu Ping's corpse to ashes with the Earthcore Crimson Flame, then returned to his own tent and ate some pills as he sat down in meditation, awaiting the arrival of tomorrow.

However... tonight was destined to not be a tranquil night.

.....

Several uninvited guests silently appeared outside Green Mulberry City's army camp, lurking in the dark of night.

"Is it here?" A man wearing a bamboo hat asked. The bamboo hat blocked part of the man's face, only revealing a sinister pair of eyes that shined with greed.

He had searched so hard, and he had finally found it...

Behind the bamboo hat man, there were also five to six men. Their cultivations ranged from the Pulse Condensation period to the Houtian realm, and several of them had a faint crescent symbol on their chest, marking their identities. These people were from the Moon Seizing Sect...

Chapter 336 – Sharing Secrets

“My sense towards the Golden Wing shouldn’t be wrong, only if she didn’t ride the Golden Wing.” Within the five to six men, a short, average looking man spoke out in a low and grating voice. His beady eyes flashed as he stared at the far off army camp.

The Golden Wing that this man spoke about was the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle.

The South Horizon Region was a vast, limitless land. Once one left the Moon Seizing Sect, the horizon was endless and complex, no matter where one went. To the west was the convoluted Southern Wilderness. If one wanted to hide in the Southern Wilderness, they could hide themselves in any small tribe. If one didn’t have a special method of searching, looking for someone there would be like searching for a needle in a haystack.

This group of people came all this way to track down Zhou Xinyu. The short man used to be the handler of the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle. Although he was weak, he had been born with a special talent that allowed him to communicate with animals. In order to avoid losing the precious golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle, he had developed a special link with it, and was able to sense it in a range of several hundred thousands of miles.

These were all survivors of the Moon Seizing Sect. They had found this small man and had used him as a guide. Together, they had crossed mountains and rivers, crossing the Southern Wilderness, and suffering the countless vicious beasts along the

way, and now they had finally caught up to Zhou Xinyu.

“Hehe... I didn’t think she would hide in a city of mortals.” The bamboo hat man licked his lips, seeming extremely excited.

“Second Uncle, although this little girl’s cultivation is only at the peak Pulse Condensation period, Apprentice Uncle Shui Yue may have left her some hidden cards which she can use to escape. Also, there are many people in this army camp. Once chaos breaks out, it will be easy to lose her. First, I’ll put down a barrier formation. Then even if she has wings, she won’t be able to escape.”

“Cough cough...” A middle-aged man wrapped in black fog coughed. His face was unnaturally gray, he had apparently been injured.

“How are we going to deal with these mortals?” The man called Second Uncle casually asked.

“If we can successfully catch Zhou Xinyu without leaking any secrets, then we can let them go. After all, this is the area of the Seven Profound Valleys. If we kill too many people here, it will be too troublesome. But if the secret is revealed, we have no choice but to kill them and blame the beast tide. The beast tide is wreaking havoc everywhere these past days; an army of a few thousand disappearing isn’t anything unusual.” The bamboo hat man sounded extremely cold and indifferent. To a sect martial artist, the lives of a few thousand mortals were simply nothing at all.

“Good, then we’ll proceed as you say.” As the Second Uncle spoke, he took out an array disk, preparing to lay down the array formation. The others also helped him. This array formation wasn’t anything too complicated, it could only hold down a master for a brief period of time; but this was enough to stop Zhou Xinyu and capture her.

Also, this barrier formation had an addition role, and that was to disallow mortals from escaping. As they were disciples of the Moon Seizing Sect, once it was known by the Seven Profound Valleys that they were wantonly slaughtering mortals within their domain, it would be extremely troublesome.

As the bamboo hat man was placing down the barrier array a step at a time, he took off his hat, revealing a very handsome face that was only marred by the fierce and brutal gaze that emitted from his eyes. He sneered as he spoke to himself, “Apprentice Uncle Shui Yue, you were too biased and cruel. Now, do not blame me, Huang Sanping, for being heartless.”

In the middle of the night, the moon was bright in the sky. Lin Ming was meditating in his tent, combining various medicines and a medium-grade true essence stone in order to recover his strength.

At this time, Lin Ming took out the jade slip from the spatial ring that Bu Luo had left behind. He had briefly studied the skills within the jade slip, and found that they weren’t too hard to cultivate.

He was about to enter the ethereal martial intent and ponder the

contents of the jade slip, when suddenly, his heart stirred. “Huh?”

Lin Ming quietly and slowly got up from his bed, moving towards the tent's windows like a dexterous cat. He drew open the curtains and looked out, seeing the deep blue starry sky and the endlessly black hills. He didn't see anything different, but he had clearly detected an unusual true essence fluctuation just a moment ago.

There was someone lying in ambush.

Lin Ming's complexion sank. As he was thinking of how to deal with them, at that moment, he saw the silhouettes of four people riding two Heavenly Wind Eagles in the distance, flying over to the army compound at a leisurely pace.

Although they were very far and the light was dim, Lin Ming was still able to clearly see all of their appearances. They were dressed unusually, and their clothing was covered with dust; obviously, they had traveled a long and tiresome journey.

Of these four people, two of them were at the Pulse Condensation period, and the other two were at the Houtian realm. One was at the middle Houtian realm, but the other one, a middle-aged man whose entire body was wrapped in a shroud of darkness was shockingly at the peak Houtian realm, not too far off from Xiantian!

Seeing this, Lin Ming's expression changed. Looking at the thickness of their true essence, they were most likely martial artists from a sect. As Lin Ming was right now, he was not a match

for a sect's peak Houtian martial artist!

As they closed in, one of the Houtian martial artists took out a purple bead from their spatial ring, and tossed it into the sky without hesitation.

There was a loud explosion, like a thunderclap striking the earth, and then a violent shock wave burst forth with a turbulent surge of wind, lifting up all of the nearby tents in the army camp. All sorts of weapons, clothing, food, bedding, and other items were thrown into the air, and dozens of soldiers that had been fast asleep were blown upwards by the blast, then fell down onto the ground, turning black and blue from the bruises and pitifully screaming out in pain.

The army camp was in immediate chaos. Many soldiers assumed that the beast tide had come again, and hastily grabbed their weapons and rushed out to meet the beast tide. With the ever-present threat of the beast tide, the soldiers hadn't taken off their armor, but in the rush, many of them had taken the wrong weapon, wore the wrong shoes, or wore the wrong helmet.

After the second beast tide had been repelled, Zhou Xinyu had stayed in the army camp because she wanted to speak to Lin Ming more. As she heard the loud thunderous roar, she immediately dressed and came out from her tent. As she looked into the sky, she was immediately stunned.

"Huang Sanping, Huang Zixuan... why are they here?" Zhou Xinyu was confused for a brief moment. Huang Sanping was the other genius from the Moon Seizing Sect that had been selected for

Divine Phoenix Island's joint talent training program. He didn't die? Why would he be here with Second Uncle Huang Zixuan? Were they looking for her?

Thinking of the possible reasons, Zhou Xinyu seemed to suddenly realize something, and her expression immediately changed.

“This is bad!”

She was frightened like a squirrel and immediately retreated back to her tent, her face draining of color.

Although Zhou Xinyu had grown up since childhood at the Moon Seizing Sect and was inexperienced about the ways of the world, she was no fool. She didn't think that Huang Sanping came here looking for lost disciples of the Moon Seizing Sect in order to rebuild the sect together. Huang Sanping must have known what she had on her body, and was eyeing the treasures of her master all along.

“What should I do?”

Zhou Xinyu panicked. She didn't know why Huang Sanping hadn't died, or why he knew what treasure was on her, or how he had pursued her all the way to Green Mulberry City. But what she did know was that the man with Huang Sanping was their Second Uncle from the Moon Seizing Sect, an outer court elder, and a master who was only a step away from reaching the Xiantian realm.

Such an existence could crush her to death with just a few fingers.

Zhou Xinyu bit her lips and quickly changed into a black set of clothes. She quietly touched the edge of the tent, wanting to mix into the chaotic crowd and flee in the whole mess. To her, this was the only possible way out.

“Who’s the boss here, come out!” Huang Sanping shouted loudly as he glanced at the crowd beneath him with a contemptuous gaze.

The man in charge was originally Zhu Ping, but Zhu Ping had been killed just an hour ago by Lin Ming, with not even his skeleton remaining. The guards that protected the commander didn’t know, and only thought that their lord had disappeared somewhere, though they didn’t know why or what he was doing. At this time, the entire army camp was in total confusion. With Zhu Ping dead, no one stood up.

However, with this shout, the soldiers quickly realized that a vicious beast tide wasn’t coming. Like this, they soon calmed down.

Since Zhu Ping wasn’t present, Lin Wanshan walked out. As he saw the cultivation of the several people in the sky, his heart thumped. If these people came here with ill intentions... and sure enough, one of them was a peak Houtian martial artist.

He cupped his fists together and said, “I wonder what brings several masters here, is there a matter?”

“You have a young girl here that came riding a golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle. Where is she?” As Huang Sanping spoke, he pointed to a corner of the army camp where a golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle was lying.

Lin Wanshan’s eyes widened. These people most likely didn’t have any good intentions looking for Lan Yi. However, this had nothing to do with them, and he didn’t want to block this danger for Lan Yi.

Lin Wanshan was about to tell them where Lan Yi was, when suddenly Huang Sanping’s Second Uncle, Huang Zinxuan’s eyebrows rose. He hoarsely said, “Over there, she just touched my array formation.”

“Hey! You want to run?” Huang Sanping licked his lips and immediately directed his Heavenly Wind Eagle towards where Zhou Xinyu was.

When Zhou Xinyu touched the array formation, in that moment she paled, her entire body trembling. She knew that she had been discovered, and immediately turned to run back into the crowd. The army camp was huge, as it was able to hold 10,000 soldiers. In addition, it was night and she wore black travelling clothes, so it was easy to quietly mingle into the crowd, rushing through the tents. Like this, it wouldn’t be easy to immediately find her.

“Haha, Junior-apprentice Sister, if you keep hiding then I’ll make my own move. Do you want these mortals to be buried along

with you?” Huang Sanping brazenly laughed, completely like a cat that was playing with a mouse. Everyone within the Moon Seizing Sect assumed that he and Zhou Xinyu were like a dragon and phoenix that loved each other. However, they didn’t know that because of the struggle for resources, they had extremely bad relations with each other, to the point of hating the other.

And now, he had brought masters with keen eyesight to look for his formerly haughty and lofty Junior-apprentice Sister. There was nowhere to run for her, no way to escape; she was just like mouse scurrying through the streets. With this, his mind was incomparably comfortable, and he laughed with self-satisfaction.

At this time, Lin Ming stood in the shadows and watched the four people in the air, silent. With his keen perception, he could see that the peak Houtian master whose entire body was covered in a black fog seemed to be injured. Even so, that peak Houtian master wasn’t someone he could deal with. He and Zhou Xinyu weren’t relatives, nor were they friends. There was no reason to risk his life against such a master in order to save her.

But at this moment, a sobbing, tearful true essence sound transmission sounded in Lin Ming’s ears. “Sir Lin, I beg you to save me! If you save me, I have secrets of the Moon Seizing Sect on me. Save me and I’ll share them with you!”

Chapter 337 – Take Action

“Mm? Secret?”

Lin Ming paused. The man in the bamboo hat had called Zhou Xinyu his junior-apprentice sister a moment ago. From this, he knew that they were also from the Moon Seizing Sect.

Now that the Moon Seizing Sect no longer existed, these surviving disciples began to eat each other. They were probably fighting over something, and it seemed to be this so-called secret.

Lin Ming narrowed his eyes as he looked at the black-shrouded man on the Heavenly Wind Eagle. Lin Ming didn't immediately answer Zhou Xinyu, because he simply wasn't a match for that black-shrouded man. Although that man had strength similar to the Sludge Monster, the difference between fighting that Sludge Monster and that black-shrouded man was immense. The Sludge Monster was a relatively immobile creature that, coupled with its huge size, was easy to strike with his Thunderfire Annihilation. But the black-shrouded man was different; Lin Ming might not even have the chance to strike.

If Lin Ming used Thunderfire Annihilation at the highest level he could, it would instantly consume 60% of his true essence reserves. If he missed, he would no longer have the strength to resist.

Not only that, but there was also a middle Houtian master standing near the black shrouded man. Outside of the barrier array, there was also a late Houtian master controlling the array

formation.

These three great Houtian masters were at the middle, late, and peak stage; it was simply a full Houtian line-up. Against them, Lin Ming would absolutely lose.

“It’s a pity that Qin Ziya is still on his way. Otherwise, there wouldn’t be any need to fear them...”

Lin Ming had a contemplative expression, when suddenly he heard the high pitched cry of a bird, and a strong wind immediately blowing out. The golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle had blown away a dozen nearby tents, and shot up into the sky.

However, the person sitting on the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle wasn’t Zhou Xinyu, but was a small and wretched looking man that was slyly smiling. He rode the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle towards Huang Sanping. As for Zhou Xinyu who had originally ridden the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle, she was sent lurching forwards by the violent wind current.

Looking at the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle fly towards Huang Sanping, Zhou Xinyu paled, “How... how could this be...”

She had wanted to rely on the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle to break through the barrier array formation and escape, but she never imagined that her mount would abandon her like this.

“Haha, Junior-apprentice Sister Zhou! The golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle will listen to its handler! Give up! Obediently surrender to me, serve me, and I might let you live another day!”

Huang Sanping lasciviously smiled and then flicked his fingers. Several silver true essence threads shot towards Zhou Xinyu.

Pu pu pu!

The silver true essence threads exploded. Although Zhou Xinyu had managed to dodge most of the attacks, the explosive shockwaves sent her staggering, shredding most of her clothes.

“Junior-apprentice Sister Zhou, you can also fall from the skies! You were once the top talent of the Moon Seizing Sect, all of the resources there were yours to enjoy, and that old idiot Shui Yue only had you as the apple of his eyes. Otherwise, how could I still be stuck at the peak Pulse Condensation period? I would have already broken through to the Houtian realm!” Huang Sanping viciously smiled as his true essence attacks struck Zhou Xinyu. Compared to her, he was three years older and his strength was naturally above Zhou Xinyu’s. After several attacks, Zhou Xinyu was in a miserable state.

On the side, Huang Zixuan hadn’t moved, letting Huang Sanping recklessly attack. He knew that these past years, Huang Sanping had suffered from bias towards Zhou Xinyu by the Sect Master Shui Yue, causing a simmering fire to burn in his heart. Now was the best time to let him give vent to this rage to clear his spirit; it would be advantageous to his future cultivation efforts.

Bang!

Two thick true essence threads blew up, and a terrifying air blast send all the soldiers around soaring backwards, spitting blood. The tents were blown up, and all sorts of weapons and armor were sent flying backwards. Countless people had been injured or crushed by the attack.

But in the center of this strong explosion was an ice-blue shield; this was the defense Zhou Xinyu had summoned to block Huang Sanping's attack.

Huang Sanping's eyebrows rose, and he smiled, "I see that Disciple Uncle Shui Yue and Disciple Uncle Lan Yue both loved you so much, they gave you methods to save your own life? This is the sect's earth-step defensive treasure, 'Blue Water Flower Curtain'. Good! Once I cripple your cultivation, I'll be able to collect both a great treasure and my adorable little Junior-apprentice Sister!"

Huang Sanping evilly smiled, and then extracted the Blue Moon treasure sword from his back. The longsword slashed out, and three sword energies cut forth.

Bang!

The Blue Water Flower Curtain shook, the curtain of light trembling. Although the earth-step defensive treasure was formidable, it all depended on who used it. Zhou Xinyu was only 18 years old, her true essence was much thinner and weaker than

Huang Sanping's.

“Sir... Sir Lin!” Zhou Xinyu was forced into a dead end. Her shaking voice was engulfed within the thunderous true essence explosion, slurred. “Moon Seizing Sect... once... top third-grade sect, had obtained... Netherworld Great Emperor... 72 Shattered Demon Heart Crystals, now... still 12 left over! My spatial ring has one! This shattered crystal can... increase... a Xiantian master's chances of breaking through to the Revolve Core realm! Sir Lin... rescue me!”

“Shattered Demon Heart Crystal? A miracle medicine that could help increase a Xiantian master's chances of reaching the Revolving Core realm?”

Lin Ming was stunned. He had never heard of this Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, but he knew who the Netherworld Great Emperor was. He was the top master of the South Horizon Region that had ruled for over 1000 years. Even including the entire Sky Spill Continent, he was one of the top ranked Peerless Emperor powerhouses. He had founded a sect on the level of a Holy Ground – Silent Demon Emperor City. But he committed all sorts of evil and atrocious deeds, killed boys and girls, and recklessly plundered talented women from all over. Finally, he moved on the daughter of an emperor of Sky Spill Continent. Then he aroused the hatred and outrage from all over, and was finally killed by a collaborative effort of several of Sky Spill Continent's emperors.

Afterwards, some of his subordinates lived and fled far away to the South Sea where they founded their own sect, which was the current South Sea Demon Region.

When Silent Demon Emperor City had been wiped off the map, many sects from the South Horizon Region had participated in the effort. At that time, the Moon Seizing Sect was a top third-grade sect whose influence was even above Peacock Mountain. It wasn't strange that they would participate, and it was highly likely that they obtained some kind of treasure!

For a legendary character like the Netherworld Great Emperor, anything that came from him would definitely be an extraordinary treasure!

If there was a medicine that could help a Xiantian master reach the Revolving Core realm, then its value could be imagined. Perhaps...

As Lin Ming realized a possibility, his heart began to race.

The Heaven Opening Pill could help a Houtian master reach the Xiantian realm. But, the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal could increase the chances of a Xiantian master successfully reaching the Revolving Core realm. Both of them were medicines that washed the muscles and marrow, and were top quality medicines that could help one break through bottlenecks. If the Heaven Opening Pill could help him in Tempering Marrow, then wouldn't the medicinal efficacy of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal be stronger?

And wouldn't it be an even greater help for him to complete Tempering Marrow?

Thinking this, Lin Ming's mind began to race. His breath became fast, and his eyes widened. This was a big opportunity that also came with a correspondingly big risk. With this great lucky chance before him, any life threatening battle was worth the risk!

But just because he was willing to take the risk didn't mean he should commit suicide. If he rushed out, he simply wasn't a match against that black-shrouded man; what should he do?

Calm down, calm down!

Under the effects of the ethereal martial intent, Lin Ming instantly calmed down, his breath becoming incomparably gentle and slow, as if here were one with the void. His eyes closed, his senses faded away, and his keen perception rushed out in all directions like a tide, searching for the only chance to save Zhou Xinyu!

When Lin Ming cut off his senses, he also cut off contact with Zhou Xinyu. This caused Zhou Xinyu's true essence sound transmission to no longer reach him.

"Lin... Sir Lin... Sir Lin..."

Zhou Xinyu helplessly looked at Lin Ming, her true essence sound transmission unable to reach him. He had both eyes closed, and seemed to be ignoring her. Suddenly her heart plunged into the depths of despair.

Looking at the indifferent Lin Ming, Zhou Xinyu could only ruefully smile.

Yes. Lin Ming was someone she had only met by chance, why would he want to save her? To do so would put his life in great danger, and might even kill him. Even between husbands and wives, in a critical life and death situation, they might not help each other live.

As the despair and hopeless anguish in her heart began to thicken, Zhou Xinyu bit her lips and desperately supported the Blue Water Flower Curtain with all her strength. However, under Huang Sanping's constant and savage attacks, the Blue Water Flower Curtain gradually weakened, almost to the point of breaking apart.

“Haha, Junior-apprentice Sister Zhou, I wonder how long you can last!”

Huang Sanping's hair crazily floated in the wind, his eyes crazed as he lifted his sword with both hands and jumped down from the Heavenly Wind Eagle. He pointed his sword straight at Zhou Xinyu; this blow would absolutely crush her Blue Water Flower Curtain!

Zhou Xinyu's lips flowed with blood, and her eyes contained a decisive and resolute color. At this moment, she no longer held any hope of living. She would rather die than let herself fall into Huang Sanping's hands.

The sword in Zhou Xinyu's hand began to vibrate, releasing a keening sound. Her eyes widened, and she revolved the true essence within her body to the limit. She was about to send out her strongest attack, when at this moment, a thunderous roar suddenly exploded from beside her, and a dazzling purple lightning lit up the entire night sky!

Zhou Xinyu hadn't even had time to figure out just what had happened. She only saw a shadow fly past at the limit of speed, his entire body wreathed in flames and thunder, shooting forwards like a glorious meteor. This figure held a spear in his hand, directly thrusting towards Huang Sanping's chest!

At this moment, time seemed to stand still, and all of the noise and chaos around seemed to disappear. In Zhou Xinyu's eyes, there was only a flash of flame and thunder. This figure that bathed in this heavenly thunder and fire with his long hair dancing in the wind seemed like a peerless god of war!

“Ping'er!”

Huang Zixuan's expression gravely changed. This enemy attack was too sudden, and its speed was too fast! Even the peak Houtian master Huang Zixuan couldn't react in time!

“Who dares!?”

Huang Zixuan shouted, and all of the black fog that surrounded him erupted outward. He slapped with his palm, and the black fog

formed into a massive python, roaring towards Lin Ming!

However, in his haste, Huang Zixuan had used the fastest move he could. But how could it compare with Lin Ming, who had gathered all of his potential in this one strike!

Bang!

The massive python burst apart, the Purple Comet Spear rushed past!

“Damn!” At this point, Huang Sanping was in an extremely dangerous situation. He abruptly changed his sword technique midway, and a blue sword fell on Lin Ming’s spear in torrents. At this time, he didn’t care about Lin Ming’s cultivation, he only thought it was a sneak attack from a master.

Ding ding ding ding!

The sword energies slammed into the vibrating azure true essence, all of them breaking at once. That spear light crossed 1000 feet, unstoppable, crashing into Huang Sanping’s chest!

Puff!

Huang Sanping had just been so insufferably arrogant with a thick fighting intent, but with the spear breaking through his chest, he vomited a mouthful of blood and organs, his body flying back like a ragdoll.

Chapter 338 – Speed of Life and Death

As Huang Zixuan saw Huang Sanping instantly suffer a major injury, his eyes turned red with rage, “Scoundrel! I’ll kill you!”

Now he would naturally kill Lin Ming first. However, just as Huang Zixuan’s eyes lit with a grim light and he was about to use his master stroke, his complexion instantly changed.

Huang Zixuan saw that another spear had appeared in Lin Ming’s hand. As Lin Ming grasped the long spear, his body erupted with true essence, the energy circulating within him to the limit, 20,000 jins of human strength bursting forth.

Sou!

The spear shot out, piercing forth like an arrow towards Huang Sanping. The air trembled, the wind howled, the power of his spear was enough to level a palace!

Huang Zixuan’s eyes were bloodshot, “You scoundrel, I’ll have you remember me!”

Huang Zixuan didn’t have time to deal with Lin Ming right now. He launched his movement technique and had to chase after the spear. Otherwise, if the severely wounded Huang Sanping who had been put into a coma was struck, he would die without a doubt.

“Go!”

Lin Ming sank. He grabbed the stunned Zhou Xinyu and rushed out of the camp.

If Lin Ming wanted to rescue Zhou Xinyu under the gaze of Hang Zixuan, this was the only way. Otherwise, with Lin Ming's speed, it was impossible to escape from Huang Zixuan while bringing someone else. He could only strike at Huang Sanping and force Huang Zixuan to save him; this was their only chance at survival!

“Where are you going?”

At this time, Lin Ming suddenly heard a shout from above him, and then the howling of sword energy. The man who attacked him was the man who had stood with Huang Zixuan, the middle Houtian realm martial artist.

This middle Houtian martial artist felt that Lin Ming was strong, and only wanted to pin down Lin Ming and prevent him from escaping, letting Huang Zixuan return and kill Lin Ming himself. Thus, he had slashed out with a large amount of sword energy, wanting to force Lin Ming into a sieged position and blocking him from running.

“Out of my way!”

At this time, Lin Ming overflowed with killing intent. Whoever dared to stop him would die! He flicked his finger, the coiling dragon steel needle howled!

Boom boom boom!

The sword energies were completely shattered. The coiling dragon steel needle roared as it shot towards the middle Houtian martial artist, his complexion completely changed, paling. The man linked his hands together, and five true essence shields appeared before him. However, there was only a popping sound as the true essence shields blew up. When the last true essence shield was about to break, the coiling dragon steel needle exploded, purple thunder radiated out, and the man screamed. Half of his body was blown to bits, and he fell down from the sky.

Lin Ming didn't even glance at him. Both of his feet moved at full speed towards the outside of the barrier array. After the coiling dragon steel needle had nearly killed the middle Houtian martial artist, it whistled as it caught up to Lin Ming, submerging back into his body.

With the Concept of Wind fused into his movements, Lin Ming's body began to fly up. At that moment, Zhou Xinyu only felt Lin Ming pulling up her hand, the whirring wind in her ears. She looked down to see that her feet were getting farther and farther away from the ground, and she was incredulous as in a brief moment, she was suddenly dozens of feet up in the air. After steadying her mind from the series of electric brilliances that had made her dizzy, she finally realized that an impossible matter had occurred.

“We’re... flying... flying up?”

How was this possible?

Lin Ming could actually fly!?

This was clearly an ability that only a Xiantian master could have!

In the chaos, Zhou Xinyu no longer had any words to voice her thoughts. As she saw a great curtain of light approaching, her complexion changed; the barrier formation was ahead!

Lin Ming's pupils narrowed. Although he didn't look back, his perception was already locked onto the black-shrouded man. This fellow had already rescued Huang Sanping, and was now chasing him!

Time was extremely tight! If he stopped to attack the barrier array, even if it only took several breaths of time, the black-shrouded man would catch up!

“Boy, you cannot run away!” As Huang Zixuan chased Lin Ming from behind, he saw with his own eyes as Lin Ming brought Zhou Xinyu flying into the sky, and an inexplicable horror quickly passed over his face. “What sort of rare flying treasure does this boy have? Humph it doesn't matter. With the barrier array formation supported by Third Brother, it will take him time to break it. I'll capture this boy alive and take a good look at what secrets he has on his body!”

“Sir Lin, in... in front!”

Seeing Lin Ming not even slow down as he approached the barrier array, Zhou Xinyu’s pretty face drained of all blood. She thought it was impossible that Lin Ming hadn’t discovered the barrier array, but now it seemed that Lin Ming was even helplessly running into it!

His speed was too quick. From the time that Zhou Xinyu had felt that something was strange to the point that she spoke, it was already too late!

“Ahh!”

Zhou Xinyu screamed in panic as she closed both her eyes. At this speed, it was equal to crashing into the ground from thousands of feet high. If they didn’t die, they would at least be severely wounded!

Hu!

At the split second that Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu dashed into the barrier array, the space in front of them seemed to have a strange distortion. Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu flew through the barrier array like a swallow through smoke, rushing past, unimpeded!

Close behind Lin Ming in hot pursuit, Huang Zixuan had been counting on the barrier array to stop Lin Ming. But now, his eyes widened as he stared at this scene before him.

How was this possible!?

At this moment, on Lin Ming's back, Zhou Xinyu had her eyes closed, and her face was pale as she screamed with all her might.

A girl's scream contained a truly terrifying energy.

She had screamed out for several breaths of times before she found that something was wrong. She opened her eyes and saw the surrounding scenery rapidly blurring. They had apparently already made it outside the army camp.

They passed through the barrier array?

She turned her head to look. The barrier array was truly behind them!

"This... what... how... how did this happen?"

Zhou Xinyu was instantly placed in a confused state of mind... how had they managed to pass through?

At first, Lin Ming had saved her from a nearly impossible situation from under the watchful eyes of Huang Zixuan. Then, they had flown into the sky without help from any tools or treasures, and now they had flown past the barrier array without any hindrance!

As impossible events occurred one after another, Zhou Xinyu was overwhelmed. She could only look in incredulity at Lin Ming's hand grabbing hers. From her angle, she could only see Lin Ming's profile.

His face was expressionless. Whether she screamed or was turned silly, he remained unmoved, only rushing forwards. Through that entire series of life and death events that had caused Zhou Xinyu's heart to stop one after another, Lin Ming had never lost his calm even once. His eyes that looked straight forward seemed to be as deep and profound as the stars in the night sky, giving off a sense of security and a feeling that he was someone she could rely on, as if he were an omnipotent being...

At that moment, turbulent waves began to surge in Zhou Xinyu's heart...

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“Damn, why was the barrier array malfunctioning at this time? Just what is Third Brother doing!?”

Huang Zixuan was enraged. He quickly attributed everything to a malfunction in the barrier array. His third brother was only the most basic and crude of array masters, but a situation in which there was a glitch in the array formation had never happened before.

As Huang Zixuan cursed his third brother as an incompetent

mess, he launched his movement technique and rushed forth, wanting to cross through the barrier array. This sort of shoddy array formation naturally didn't recognize individuals. If Huang Zixuan wanted to pass, he didn't need to destroy it, but he still had to put in a decent amount of effort.

But now that the barrier array had failed, there was no need to waste so much time. He could directly rush through and save himself the effort.

Dozens of feet passed in a fleeting second.

Soon, as Huang Zixuan was about to break through the barrier array at full speed, he suddenly felt that something was wrong.

Mm?

He tried to make an emergency stop, but there wasn't enough time. With a 'peng' sound like a piece of pork slapping against a cutting board, Huang Zixuan collided solidly against the barrier array. His head was knocked into confusion, and even his intestines seemed to be scrambled.

Seeing this, Zhou Xinyu's eyes widened. She watched as Huang Zixuan struck the barrier array like a blind fly, spitting blood and limping down to the floor...

Zhou Xinyu's mouth widened in surprise. What happened to Huang Zixuan?

Zhou Xinyu wanted to take a good look at just how this unusual and fortunate change of events occurred, but Lin Ming was too fast. In a blink of an eye, Huang Zixuan had disappeared into the endless night, invisible.

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“You idiot!”

Huang Zixuan was furious. He tossed back a bunch of healing pills and screamed out, “Third Brother you idiotic fool! Hurry up and remove the array, we’ll catch up to him together!”

“Ah—a—!”

A high-pitched bird cry sounded out, and the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle shot into the sky. Huang Zixuan, the handler, the severely wounded Huang Sanping, Huang Zixuan’s younger Third Brother, and a Houtian martial artist all leapt onto the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle together, chasing after Lin Ming.

Heard the cry of the eagle, Zhou Xinyu panicked. She had been wondering how Huang Zixuan had found her so quickly, and it seemed as if the truth lay within the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle!

Alas, this golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle which was her

only means of transportation, as well as the beast that had protected her life, had actually become something that had almost killed her.

“Lin... Sir Lin... they’re riding the Golden Wing...”

As Zhou Xinyu worriedly spoke, she hadn’t even finished when she suddenly shut up. Her eyes widened as she saw a massive dragon-shaped beast with a 60 foot wingspan and a long tail, its entire body covered in shimmering scales, fly up from a deep dark mountain valley.

Its scales were like crimson fire, and its eyes were a deep glazed gold. Its teeth were sharp, and it gave off an aura that made one’s heart race! This was clearly a winged red dragon!

This... this is...

Zhou Xinyu gulped, her expression bitter. With the beast tide freely rampaging area, they had actually encountered such a high-grade vicious beast. This was normal, but for them to encounter such a beast at this time and have to fight it off, that was simply bad luck.

Zhou Xinyu didn’t know what to do. But at this time, Lin Ming yanked her hand, throwing her straight towards the Winged Flood Dragon.

“Roar!”

The bass dragon roar resounded throughout the world; the clouds split in half!

Zhou Xinyu was stunned. Lin Ming stepped onto the back of the Winged Flood Dragon, and then the Winged Flood Dragon spread open its massive wings. It was like a flaming red feathered arrow, directly piercing into the dark blue sky!

Zhou Xinyu was speechless with horror. Now that she stepped onto the solid back of the red dragon beast, she could hear the howling of the wind and the terrifying roars of the beast, like a saber cutting through grass. Just by the wind buffeting against her, one could imagine how fast this red dragon beast was flying!

‘This is... Sir Lin’s mount?’

‘It is... a Winged Flood Dragon?’

In the rush a moment ago, Zhou Xinyu wasn’t able to clearly recall the origins of this vicious beast. But when she calmed down a bit and had time to think, she suddenly remembered that she had read about this Winged Flood Dragon in the ancient texts. Its value was at least 10 times higher than the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle! And after growing up, it would be a vicious beast equal to a Xiantian master!

She opened her mouth several times, but as she saw Lin Ming standing in front of her, a cold and indifferent expression on his face, she didn’t know what to say.

“What do you want to say?” Lin Ming suddenly turned his head, looking at Zhou Xinyu.

Chapter 339 – Barren Mountain Dead End

“Sir Lin... I...” Zhou Xinyu opened her mouth, as if she wanted to say something to Lin Ming, but in the end she didn’t know what to say. “Sir Lin... is this your mount?”

After asking this, Zhou Xinyu was a bit embarrassed. This was a question with an obvious answer, she was just trying to find some way to open up a conversation.

Lin Ming nodded, “Yes, its name is Chi Yan.”

“What a beautiful Winged Flood Dragon. This is my first time seeing one. Before, I had only ever seen it in the ancient texts.” Zhou Xinyu looked at the fiery flame-colored wings of the Winged Flood Dragon, a very fond look in her eyes.

These long crimson feathers were truly gorgeous.

“I heard that the Winged Flood Dragon has the bloodline of the Winged Rain Dragon, and that after growing up it can compare with a Xiantian powerhouse.” Zhou Xinyu’s large eyes widened as she curiously stroked the Winged Flood Dragon’s cold and hard dragon scales.

“Yes, but right now Chi Yan is only a child, so its strength is only at the middle Houtian, late Houtian realm.” When Lin Ming had rescued Zhou Xinyu a moment ago, he hadn’t dared to summon the Winged Flood Dragon early. He was afraid that the Winged Flood Dragon would be blocked by the black-shrouded man or

someone else. Also, with the Winged Flood Dragon's strength, it wouldn't be easy for it to break through the barrier array.

"That's right, Sir Lin, how did you pass through the barrier array?" This thought just popped into Zhou Xinyu's mind. After so many inconceivable matters had occurred one after the other a moment ago, she wanted to ask why, but in the end she didn't because the questions she might ask would involve Lin Ming's secrets.

Lin Ming casually explained, "The man who laid down the barrier array was an extremely amateurish array master, and I also happen to have a slight understanding of array formations."

Normally, laying down such a massive array formation required at least a Xiantian cultivation. For instance, the Seven Profound Martial House's Ten Thousand Killing Array and seven major killing arrays were all laid down by Xiantian masters. Huang Zixuan wasn't from the Array Faction, and his cultivation wasn't high. He had barely been able to lay down the array formation, so naturally it was full of flaws and holes.

As for Lin Ming, he had inherited the memories of an array master from the Realm of the Gods, and he had also been able to point out many flaws in Ancestor Chi Yan's eight trigrams fire formation. Afterwards, he had even discussed array formations with Ancestor Chi Yan for nearly an entire month.

Ancestor Chi Yan's understanding and comprehension of array formations was naturally not something that a nobody like Huang Zixuan could compare with, or even something the Seven

Profound Valleys' Array Faction could compare with. Lin Ming had benefitted a great deal from his talks with Ancestor Chi Yan, gradually merging together the Realm of the Gods' array formation principles and those of Sky Spill Continent.

As for the current Lin Ming, although he hadn't yet laid down array formations himself, his understanding of the principles behind array formations had reached an extremely high level. After all, the theoretical cores of the Realm of the Gods' array formation techniques and Sky Spill Continent's array formation techniques were the same.

Just before they had escaped, Lin Ming had entered into the ethereal martial intent and was able to examine the barrier array. As he carefully studied the structure of the barrier array, he had found a significant flaw which had allowed him to successfully pass through.

Otherwise, if he directly rushed through, even if Lin Ming understood array formation principles to a much greater degree, he wouldn't be able to break through the barrier array without pausing.

Listening to Lin Ming's casual explanation, Zhou Xinyu could only ruefully smile. Could this still only be considered as having a 'slight understanding' of array formations?

Although Huang Zixuan wasn't very accomplished in array formations, a barrier array couldn't be easily passed through as if it never existed.

It could only be said that Lin Ming's degree of array formation understanding was on an equal level with Huang Zixuan. Zhou Xinyu was completely unable to imagine how Lin Ming could have such astonishing progress in his martial arts cultivation and also be skilled in the Dao of array formations at a tender age of 16. From ancient times until now, what array master hadn't spent dozens of years before finally being able to gain some accomplishments in the Dao of array formations?

Zhou Xinyu could only sigh. Lin Ming's talent was already completely beyond her realm of understanding.

At this point, Zhou Xinyu suddenly heard a vague eagle cry from behind. Her heart turned cold, and she looked back. Under the bright moon, against the inky jet black night sky, there was a golden speck rapidly chasing them.

Zhou Xinyu's heart jumped, she nervously said, "Sir Lin, they're chasing us!"

"Mm, I know." Lin Ming didn't look back. When that golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle had been taken back by its handler, he had already expected this.

The golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle was several times faster than an ordinary Heavenly Wing Eagle, and was a precious mount that had the bloodline of a Saint Beast. Its bloodline could be traced all the way back to the Golden-winged Roc.

Although the Golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle's bloodline purity was much less than that of the Winged Flood Dragon, the Winged Flood Dragon that Lin Ming sat on was still a child. As for the Moon Seizing Sect's golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle, it was in the prime of its life.

Thus, the Winged Flood Dragon had no advantage in terms of speed.

"Sir Lin, what do we do?" Zhou Xinyu was already accustomed to relying on Lin Ming. After those matters that happened awhile ago, they had given Zhou Xinyu a faint feeling that no matter what danger they would be in, Lin Ming would always have a way out.

"We'll run away first then figure it out." Lin Ming's reply was very cheeky. First he would leave the range of Green Mulberry City, so he wouldn't draw them into any possible calamity.

As long as the Winged Flood Dragon and the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle didn't have too great a difference in flying speed, everything would be much easier. Qin Ziya wasn't too far off. If they could use a sound transmitting talisman soon to find out where Qin Ziya's location was and then fly to him, it would only take a few hours with the Winged Flood Dragon's speed.

After they reached Qin Ziya, nothing would be a problem.

At this moment, Zhou Xinyu was startled. She said, "Sir Lin, this is bad, they suddenly accelerated by a lot."

“Mm?” Lin Ming turned back and glanced at the horizon. He saw that the figure of the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle had grown larger, and although it was still far away, he could see that the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle’s body seemed to be colored in a touch of red.

“That’s the Golden Acupuncture Technique. They use a three foot long needle that’s as thick as a finger to stimulate the full potential of the Golden Wing, letting it break through to it’s speed limit.” Zhou Xinyu clenched her teeth as she said this, her heart full of anger and hate. This technique would cause irreversible damage to the Heavenly Wind Eagle, and if it continued flying for too long, it would exhaust its life force.

Although the reason that Zhou Xinyu had ended up in this position was the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle, in the end, the Golden Wing didn’t differentiate between right or wrong, it just obeyed commands as it followed its instincts. It wasn’t at fault. If there was someone to blame, it would be Huang Sanping for being too cruel.

The golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle became increasingly fast. In an instant, it had closed half of the gap between it and Lin Ming. Zhou Xinyu could even clearly make out the figures on the back of the Golden Wing; Huang Sanping’s face was full of blood and hideous.

Huang Sanping’s cultivation was only at the peak Pulse Condensation period. Lin Ming had struck out with intent to kill, but his move was blocked by Huang Zixuan. Finally, he had only been able to severely wound him

When Huang Sanping woke up after eating many pills and medicines, he still had multiple broken bones, was covered with bruises, and even his meridians were damaged.

Such a heavy injury couldn't be considered a debilitating disability that affected his future cultivation, but it was enough for him to stay home for several months. For those talents that seized every second and minute they could to cultivate, not being able to do so for such a long time was naturally a great loss. Now Huang Sanping wanted to capture Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu alive and brutally cripple them, wasting their martial arts. He would torture Lin Ming until he begged for death, and then he would imprison Zhou Xinyu, violating and abusing her.

Only this would be able to assuage the hate in his heart.

Because his anger had aggravated the true essence in his body, Huang Sanping gave a stuffy cough and almost spat blood. He took a pill from his spatial ring, swallowing it, then asking the small man, "Can you go faster?"

The value of the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle was naturally not worth mentioning in comparison to Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu. Also, this was Sky Fortune Kingdom – the territory of the Seven Profound Valleys. If they didn't catch up to those two and they managed to find support, then everything would be much more difficult.

"Not possible. If I pierce the Golden Wing again, it won't be able

to hold out.” The small man held a long, cold needle in his hand. Under his feet, the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle’s back was layered in red, and its golden feathers stood on end, shivering.

“Ping’er, don’t worry. Up ahead is a barren mountain. Even if they have support, they won’t arrive so quickly. As long as we can catch up to them before they reach the barren mountains, they won’t be able to run away.” Huang Zixuan’s eyes shined with a cold light. He also loathed Lin Ming.

“Second Uncle, who is that boy? Do you know?” Huang Sanping asked.

“I don’t.” Huang Zixuan shook his head. “But his cultivation isn’t at the Houtian realm. He should be some large sect’s genius disciple, most likely an earth-step talent. If it’s like this, then we definitely cannot let him leave. If we do, then I fear we won’t have any place to safely go in the future.

Huang Zixuan was sullen. He thought for a moment and said, “Or maybe our situation has already been revealed by him using a sound transmitting talisman. We’ll have to bet everything we have on this gamble; our only chance is to succeed at all costs. After we obtain the resources, we’ll leave the Divine Phoenix Province and conceal our identities. With the resources of the Moon Seizing Sect, we’ll be able to establish our own influence!”

As Huang Zixuan thought this, he felt the blood in his body accelerate. To be the founder of his own sect and become a sect master, just how thrilling and wonderful would that be?

.....

The wind whistled. Lin Ming had already ridden the Winged Flood Dragon to the skies just before the barren mountains. This was a lone mountain range within Sky Fortune Kingdom; there was rarely anyone here.

But their pursuers were getting closer and closer. If it continued like this, they would catch up in half an incense stick of time.

Zhou Xinyu stood behind Lin Ming and was also anxious as she saw the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle approach, but also felt a twinge of guilt. She looked at Lin Ming, her heart confused, and she said, “Sorry, I’ve put you in danger.”

“There’s nothing you need to apologize to me for. Lucky chances come with their own risks. This is a decision I made of my own will; I’m just doing what I need to do.”

“Oh...” Zhou Xinyu bit her lips and sighed in her heart. Although she felt grateful and guilty towards Lin Ming, hearing him say that he was just doing what he needed to do still made her heart feel inexplicably uncomfortable. Even she felt this feeling was ridiculous and didn’t make any sense at all. Maybe it was because she was at the edge of death and was looking for some way to console her spirit, but she subconsciously didn’t want this life and death experience to be because of what benefits they would offer each other...

As Zhou Xinyu thought this, she shook her head in self-deprecation.

Chapter 340 – Shattered Crystal Blood Diffusion

Lin Ming naturally didn't notice Zhou Xinyu's young, girlish thoughts. He was only quickly thinking of a way to escape from this predicament.

Once Huang Zixuan caught up, Zhou Xinyu would die. As for him, facing an assault from a late Houtian master and a peak Houtian master, his odds weren't looking too great either.

As for attacking Huang Zixuan's mount, if Lin Ming could attack the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle, then the enemy could also attack his Winged Flood Dragon. If Lin Ming wanted to compare his single attacks to the attacks of three Houtian masters against each other's mounts, he would be the one on the losing end.

No matter how Lin Ming looked at things, he had been forced into an absolute dead end.

Calm down, calm down, there's always a way out... Lin Ming completely relaxed his mind, and his breathing slowed down. He slowly thought about the possible escape methods and rejected them one at a time.

It seemed... as if there was only one road to walk...

But walking down this road was also extremely dangerous. A

single careless mistake and he would be beyond redemption!

Lin Ming took a deep breath and soon decided. In the path of martial arts, there were already countless risks. In the 3000 endless universes, there were countless lands like the Sky Spill Continent, and innumerable geniuses. Yet, the number that managed to reach the peak of martial arts was actually very few. Even if they were like Lin Ming and others who had received a great fortuitous opportunity, if they didn't experience many risks and dangers, wanting to set foot on the peak of martial arts was just an idiot speaking nonsense.

Lin Ming firmed his resolve, clenched his teeth, and said, "Miss Zhou, I remember that you said before that the Moon Seizing Sect had obtained 72 Shattered Demon Heart Crystal shards, and there are still 12 left over. You have one in your spatial ring right?"

"Yes... that's right." Zhou Xinyu was stunned for a moment, then nodded.

"Tell me, what exactly is the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal?" Lin Ming's voice was low and rapid. Now that Huang Zixuan and his group had caught up to less than 10 miles away, it was time to drop all modesty.

Zhou Xinyu didn't know why Lin Ming would have the heart to care about this at this moment, but she quickly explained, "1000 years ago in the holy war to punish the demonic sect... the Southern Horizon Region's allied armies invaded Silent Demon Emperor City, and the Netherworld Great Emperor was put to death by several great emperors. The Netherworld Great Emperor

was a man who cultivated peerless devil arts, and when he died in battle, the Demon Heart in his body was shattered by one of those emperors. At that time, one of those Demon Heart Crystal fragments was obtained by my Moon Seizing Sect's Sovereign. Afterwards, the Sovereign returned to the sect and refined this Demon Heart fragment into 72 Shattered Demon Heart Crystals. Every piece of these shattered crystals contains a vast inherent energy, making them a top quality miracle medicine. Take one, melt it with medicine and direct it into the body, and fuse it into the meridians and body points. Like this, it can help a Xiantian master break through to the Revolving Core realm."

"Help a Xiantian master break through to the Revolving Core realm... if it's really like you say, then why has the Moon Seizing Sect been in decline for the last 1000 years?" Lin Ming asked reasonably.

Zhou Xinyu said, "When my Moon Seizing Sect participated in the demonic holy war a thousand years ago, although we managed to obtain a Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, we also lost a massive number of masters, and even the Sovereign of that time was extremely wounded. After returning to the sect, the Sovereign went into life or death close door seclusion. However, he died before he was successful... my Moon Seizing Sect's legacy cultivation methods were never considered too good to begin with. In these past years, the fact that we could produce Revolving Core masters to guard the sect is all thanks to the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal."

"So that's how it is, I see now. I also have another question. You said that the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal needs a medicine to direct it into the body, what sort of medicine is that?"

“Melt it with blood. As long as the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal is melted with one’s own blood essence, they can directly swallow it into their bodies.” Zhou Xinyu’s spoke quickly. As the two were speaking, Huang Zixuan had already pulled in several miles closer. If he pulled closer again, he would enter into a sword’s long-distance attack range.

“I understand. Can you show me your spatial ring’s Shattered Demon Heart Crystal?” Lin Ming suddenly stretched out his hand, his intent clear.

Zhou Xinyu bit her lips. Although this was her sect’s most precious and valuable treasure, there was no reason in hesitating at this moment.

She quickly took out a transparent crystal bottle from her spatial ring. Suspended in the center of this crystal bottle was a red sphere the size of a water drop; this was the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal.

As soon as Lin Ming received the crystal bottle, his eyes narrows. This small red crystal actually emitted a faint but ancient endless energy that made one’s heart race.

Just by this energy, Lin Ming could tell that Zhou Xinyu’s words weren’t an exaggeration.

At this time, Zhou Xinyu seemed to suddenly realize something, and rapidly said, “Sir Lin, don’t tell me you are planning to

swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal and then fight a final battle with Huang Zixuan! This... you absolutely cannot do this!”

“Why?” Lin Ming lifted his head to look at Zhou Xinyu.

Zhou Xinyu urgently said, “Sir Lin, this medicine was meant to be taken by a Xiantian master. But you Sir Lin are only at the Pulse Condensation period. If you eat it, your body will blow up, killing you! Not only that, but even if it were a Xiantian master that swallowed this medicine, they would experience a truly painful and debilitating body quenching process. During this time, not only would their strength not increase at all, but because of the disorder and chaos in their true essence, their combat strength would drop!”

“I know.” Lin Ming quietly replied. Everything that Zhou Xinyu had said lined up with his expectations. In fact, most pills that increased one’s cultivation were extremely violent and fiercely potent medicines that had the same effects as the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. For instance, the Heaven Opening Pill was the same too.

In a top quality pill, the energy contained within was vast and pure. In order to rein in and subdue this energy, one naturally had to struggle for it. When a martial artist was using their own true essence to struggle against the pill energy, their own combat strength would decrease in the meantime. Therefore, when a martial artist decided to take a pill like this, they had to find a safe place first.

A sect’s martial artist could choose to go into seclusion in an

undisturbed chamber. As for other martial artists, they could ask a person they trusted to guard them.

Lin Ming didn't currently didn't have these choices, but he could create them.

.....

“Second Uncle, that is the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal! That slut, she actually gave it to an outsider!” Four to five miles away, with Huang Sanping's sharp eyesight, he could clearly see just what was in the crystal bottle.

Huang Zixuan frowned, “Don't worry, he won't swallow it unless he wants to commit suicide.”

Huang Zixuan wasn't worried that the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal would be eaten, he was only worried that it would be ruined, or even destroyed. “Hurry, hurry up!” Huang Zixuan's voice was ice cold.

“This boy!”

A cold light flashed in Huang Zixuan's eyes. He could only watch helplessly from several miles away as Lin Ming cut open his wrist, and dripped some blood into the crystal bottle.

“Second Uncle, this boy knows he cannot keep the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, so he wants to ruin it!” Huang Sanping's

eyes were red with fury. The Shattered Demon Heart Crystal had to diffuse into one's blood so it could be guided into the body. If it mixed with the blood essence of others, half of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal would be ruined.

“He actually dares to ruin my Moon Seizing Sect's Shattered Demon Heart Crystal! I will waste this boy's martial arts! I'll cut him to pieces, and have him suffer an agonizingly slow death!”

Huang Sanping clenched his jaws as he spoke.

.....

Lin Ming watched as his blood flowed into the crystal bottle. As his bright red blood touched the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, it immediately began to boil with excitement.

Gu gu gu!

As the blood roiled, the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal began to melt. Lin Ming watched in fascination as the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal and his blood began to fuse together, eventually becoming a viscous, syrupy liquid in the crystal bottle.

“Get ready, we're going down.”

As Lin Ming's voice fell, the Winged Flood Dragon let out a roar and then plunged straight towards the vast barren mountain range.

The golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle followed right behind!

In terms of body, the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle was several times larger than the Winged Flood Dragon. From this distance, it looked just like a massive eagle that was hunting a small, red snake.

At this time, Lin Ming was tranquil like the surface of a calm lake. He slowly took out the Dreamland Pearl from his spatial ring; this was his final hope.

In that instant that the Winged Flood Dragon touched the ground, Lin Ming held Zhou Xinyu's hand and jumped down from its back. At that same time, he threw out the Dreamland Pearl...

The dreamland enchantment activated!

Hu!

Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu were completely isolated from the outside world. Zhou Xinyu suddenly felt as if a subtle change had occurred in her surroundings, "This is..."

"It's an illusionary world. it can guarantee us safety for some time." Lin Ming calmly said.

The Dreamland Pearl created a sealed off dreamland

enchantment world. It was impossible for anyone below the Xiantian realm to break through. Naturally, it could block any attack from Huang Zixuan.

However, it was impossible for the dreamland enchantment to continue forever. As long as it was active, the enchantment would consume energy. At full energy, the Dreamland Pearl would be able to keep the enchantment up for an entire half day. However, if it was under a sustained barrage of attacks, then it might last only three or four hours.

These three to four hours were all the time Lin Ming had left.

Huang Sanping was stunned silly as he saw Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu disappear. “What... what happened? Where did they go?”

“Humph, it’s only an illusion, what an insignificant skill.” Huang Zixuan closed his eyes and let his perception flow out. He easily discovered some unusual true essence fluctuations nearby. With his strength, it was easy for him to discover just where the dreamland enchantment was.

“It’s here.”

Huang Zixuan pointed towards a clearing. With his perception scanning the area, he was able to clearly sense a spherical enchantment of some sort, forming its own independent space.

“Haha, so it’s like this.” Huang Sanping grinned. He also felt the

existence of the enchantment.

“It’s just an illusion enchantment, isn’t this like an ostrich burying its head in the sand?”

“Third Brother, break his array!” Huang Zixuan didn’t attack, instead letting his Third Brother do the work while he stood by, just in case Lin Ming decided to suddenly launch an attack or escape.

Escaping into this enchantment was equal to a death wish. But then again, even if they didn’t enter this enchantment, they would still die.

The man who was called Third Brother looked 30 to 40 years old. His eyebrows were high, and the angles of his face were just like slanted scars. He took a thick saber in his hand, “Saber technique – Wind Chopper!”

This saber strike contained 70 to 80% of Third Brother’s strength. An azure half-moon of saber energy roared out, slamming into the enchantment.

Bang!

The saber energy shattered. The enchantment only shook a little, without even the slightest bit of

damage.

“Mm?”

The man named Third Brother was taken aback; even Huang Zixuan knitted his eyebrows. The strength of this enchantment had exceeded his imagination.

.....

At this time, within the enchantment, Lin Ming was sitting cross legged on a rock, unaware of all the fierce and violent attacks that were striking the enchantment from the outside. He took the crystal bottle of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal that had been melted with his blood, and glanced at Zhou Xinyu, whose entire face had blanched, saying, “Guard me, I will now begin to swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal!”

Chapter 341 – With Effort, Everything Is Possible

“You... you want to absorb the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal under the protection of the enchantment world!?!?” Zhou Xinyu was stunned; this was simply madness.

Let alone an extraordinary medicine like the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, even a top-level medicine like the Heaven Opening Pill usually required a martial artist to take multiple steps beforehand. They would bathe in incense, seal themselves off in a room, lay down layers of defensive array formations, enter into an absolute quiet where no one would dare to disturb them, and then finally revolve their power to swallow the pill.

But Lin Ming was surrounded by wolves on all sides, each waiting for an opportunity to rip his throat out. The attacks from the outside were endless, and the enchantment wouldn't stop shaking; even the ground trembled. It was unknown just when the energy of the enchantment would run out. In this situation, Lin Ming, a boy with a mere Pulse Condensation cultivation actually wanted to absorb the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal which only a Xiantian master could swallow?

Insanity! Madness!

“Sir Lin, how could you do this, this is suicide!” Zhou Xinyu was extremely anxious.

“There's no other way.” Lin Ming flicked his fingers, and under

the attraction of his soul force, the red liquid in the crystal bottle shot out, turning into a red sphere.

How could Lin Ming not know that this decision was crazy?

The Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was a completely unknown and unfamiliar medicine; he had no idea what total effects it would have if he swallowed it.

Perhaps he might not be able to withstand the baptism of energy, and then blow up.

Even if he could persist through that, the dreamland enchantment would only last for a few hours. If he couldn't completely absorb the medicinal efficacy in a few hours, and then fully restore his combat strength, he would still die!

Bang!!

With a loud crash, a terrifying explosion sounded from outside the enchantment, the ground suddenly shaking. Huang Zixuan had finally moved. Within the enchantment, Lin Ming could clearly see each and every action that Huang Zixuan took. This sort of oppressive feeling was just like a common mortal facing off against a tiger with only a soon-to-be broken pane of glass between them.

Normally, a martial artist would never be able to calm their hearts and circulate their energy. If anything went wrong, they could be instantly overcome by their inner demons.

But Lin Ming actually wanted to absorb the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal in this situation, and also needed to recover his combat strength within a few hours.

Lin Ming stared at the red ball of liquid that exuded a faint and boundless energy. His mind moved, and the liquid ball split in half, one half drifting towards Lin Ming.

As the red liquid closed in, Lin Ming could feel the blood through his entire body began to boil, as if it were being forcefully summoned upwards.

This demonic blood had an amazingly evil aura!

“No matter how difficult the road ahead of me is, I believe – with effort, anything is possible!”

Xiu!

That melted half of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal mixed with Lin Ming’s blood shot into his mouth.

As the red liquid entered, a sweet and metallic taste spread through his mouth; this was the taste of blood.

Lin Ming closed his eyes, shut off his six senses, and immediately entered into the ethereal martial intent. Now, the explosions that

rocked the earth below him no longer affected him at all.

However, this ethereal state was only maintained for a mere 10 breaths of time, when he was interrupted by a severe pain pouring forth from his dantian, as if it were breaking in half.

Roar!

In Lin Ming's ears, he could hear a demonic cry sound like a thunderclap, as if it could split stone and dispel clouds. The roar shook Lin Ming's ears, and blood began to flow from his nose.

This... what is this?

Lin Ming was shocked. He clearly felt that the drop of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal contained an enormous and terrifyingly overwhelming will! It blotted out the sky, obscuring the mountains and the seas!

Were these the ruined thoughts left behind by the Netherworld Great Emperor?

As this idea popped up, Lin Ming suddenly felt his mind shake.

Bang!

Lin Ming's consciousness was suddenly pulled back to his spiritual sea. There, in his mind, countless fragmented scenes

appeared, each one of these extremely lifelike and real.

Innumerable demons shot up into the sky from his spiritual sea. Their upper bodies were naked, and their skin had a grayish-blue metallic luster. Their bodies were corded with thick muscles, entangled in chains, and they held death scythes in their hands.

Hou hou hou!

As the roars of these demons resounded, all of them suddenly rushed towards Lin Ming. But at this time, Lin Ming had been reborn into an ancient demon god. He held a large mountain axe in his hand, and he stood high in the sky!

That axe was 10 feet long, and thicker than an arm. The axehead was over three feet wide, and the blade itself was a deep, blood red. It emitted a savage and violent energy, causing one's heart to race.

“Kill kill kill!”

The ancient demon god brandished that large axe, and chopped apart all those rushing demons with a single axe stroke!

In that moment, limbs flew everywhere, blood shot out to all corners of the land.

Every time the ancient evil god killed a demon, he would drink its blood until its eyes went dark and lifeless. But in their wake, countless demons rushed up behind them.

Demonic blood dyed the skies red.

Was this ancient evil god the Netherworld Great Emperor?

Lin Ming was startled. He had a strong feeling that what he was seeing wasn't just illusions, but true events that had occurred in the past. These were the memories of the Netherworld Great Emperor!

Then what were these demons? Where did they come from? Why had this brutal war erupted? Just who was good, and who was evil?

“Hahahahaha!”

Between the heavens and the earth, the Netherworld Great Emperor suddenly burst into wild laughter. His voice was magnificent and boundless, resounding through the universe!

The skies broke apart, and a will that defied the heavens surged forth like a tsunami!

The great axe pointed to the heavens, his foot stepped upon the earth. Within the universe, he alone ruled all!

Bang!

The demonic battlefield suddenly exploded. For a moment, Lin Ming thought that his spiritual sea had disintegrated. He suddenly opened both of his eyes to see that his clothes had all broken, and his entire body was dyed red with blood!

At this moment, Zhou Xinyu's beautiful face had already drained of blood. She didn't know what to do, but when she saw Lin Ming open his eyes, she was worried but also excited. Her voice shook as she said, "Sir Lin, Sir Lin..."

Lin Ming wanted to reply, but as he opened his mouth, all that came out was a mouthful of blood. Lin Ming finally understood the mystery behind the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. At the same time that it contained a pure and terrifying energy, it also contained the remnants of the Netherworld Great Emperor's consciousness.

Swallowing the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal meant that one had to withstand destruction of both the mind and the body!

Outside the enchantment, Huang Zixuan and his entire group were attacking. The dreamland enchantment began to tremble more and more, and the land which the enchantment was over was already turned to slag.

However, Lin Ming simply wasn't in the mood to care about this. He felt as if his entire body was pinned down with 1000 needles, and 10,000 sabers were twisted into his body. Even with Lin Ming's formidable will, this kind of pain was difficult to resist.

It was enough to cause someone to want to kill themselves.

He was like a sun dried shrimp on the ground. Even his teeth had cracked a bit from him biting down too hard.

Bang!

Lin Ming's consciousness was once again thrown into chaos. The remnant thoughts of the Netherworld Great Emperor were like a tide that broke into Lin Ming's spiritual sea, wanting to wash away all!

Normally, once a martial artist's body had been tortured to the extreme, and they wished to die, their spiritual protection would be incomparably fragile. When the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal's remnant consciousness rushed in at this moment, it was likely they would turn into an idiot.

A peak Houtian master would absolutely not be able to withstand this dual attack. Thus, the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was only barely able to be absorbed by someone who had a Xiantian cultivation.

Lin Ming's cultivation was only at the Pulse Condensation period. Under the attack of the Netherworld Great Emperor's remnant consciousness against his spiritual sea, even though he was extremely strong-willed, he still had a mind-splitting headache, and his ears bled profusely.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

In a few breaths of times, it was unknown how many times Lin Ming had been bombarded by this remnant consciousness. Towering waves appeared in Lin Ming's spiritual sea, but he was still able to withstand it!

The attack of the Netherworld Great Emperor's remnant consciousness was the most dangerous phase for any martial artist that swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. But for Lin Ming, it was more scary than truly dangerous.

Before now, Lin Ming had already swallowed the memory fragments of two Supreme Elders from the Realm of the Gods. No matter how strong the Netherworld Great Emperor was, he simply wasn't comparable to the beings from the Realm of the Gods.

Lin Minch clenched his teeth, and began to wear down the Netherworld Great Emperor's remnant consciousness with his own mind and soul. He was aware that if he wanted to absorb the energy from the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, he first had to eliminate the Netherworld Great Emperor's remnant consciousness.

The pain of soul force and consciousness wearing down on each other was unimaginable. It was worse than polishing a gaping bloody wound with sandpaper.

This was true soul-rending pain. When Lin Ming had absorbed the memories of the two elders from the Realm of the Gods, he still

hadn't experienced this great a pain. The Supreme Elders from the Realm of the Gods had, after all, only left behind a fragmented soul, without any self-consciousness, only a soul's instinct. As for the Netherworld Great Emperor, he had left behind a true remnant consciousness. To erase this cruel and heaven-defying ill was no easy matter.

Time passed a second and a minute at a time. Lin Ming bled profusely from his head. As he fell over, even the rock underneath him was stained red with blood. If it wasn't for Lin Ming's blood vitality having been enhanced several times by entering the Sorcerer Pagoda, he would have already died from excessive blood loss.

After an endless period of agony, Lin Ming finally stamped out the remnant consciousness left behind by the Netherworld Great Emperor.

Thus, although the energy of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was still violent and unruly, without direction from the will of the Netherworld Great Emperor's thoughts, it could finally be moved around by Lin Ming.

“Tempering Marrow!”

Lin Ming's mind echoed with this one thought as he did his best to revolve the 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians' technique to direct Tempering Marrow. He controlled the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal's energy and directed it into his skeleton; there wasn't much time left!

At first, when Lin Ming had used the energy from the Heaven Opening Pill for Tempering Marrow, because his Bone Forging was too thorough and his bones were perfectly compact, it had been extremely difficult because it was as if they were made from stone. Like this, Tempering Marrow was not easy at all.

Lin Ming had thought that it would also be extremely difficult to force the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal's energy into his bones, but he was wrong. The energy of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was like heavy mercury, seizing all opportunities to spread, invading at any chance.

It was like a pointed cone that drilled into Lin Ming's dense skeleton, flowing towards the marrow.

As the energy entered the marrow, Lin Ming felt as if his own marrow had been poured into a vat of boiling oil. What followed was an extremely harrowing marrow pain.

Chi chi chi!

The marrow impurities were burned away by the energy. This feeling was just like his marrow being tossed into a frying pan, all of the impurities being burned away!

Lin Ming was soaked in sweat. This was the last step to absorbing the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal.

In the throes of this excruciating pain, Lin Ming maintained his calm and collected thoughts. He realized that the energy from half of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal wasn't nearly enough to help him complete Tempering Marrow. He had to make a choice. He could first temper a part of his body...

Chapter 342 – Marrow like Golden Soup

When Lin Ming had swallowed the Heaven Opening Pill, he had only been able to temper a portion of his right hand because of the limited medicinal efficacy.

After Tempering Marrow, Lin Ming's right hand experienced a massive increase in defensive power and attack power. But, at most it was equal to another trump card; the overall increase in Lin Ming's total strength wasn't too great.

This time, Lin Ming decided to use half of the energy to temper both of his hands, and the other half to temper his entire body.

Only when his entire body had undergone Tempering Marrow would his overall strength rise.

Pa pa pa!

With a sound that was like firewood crackling in flames, Lin Ming grit his teeth and began to revolve the 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians'. The manic energy burned through the impurities of his marrow. This painful ache as if one's bones were being set on fire could be imagined.

Lin Ming was supporting himself with his will alone. Once the energy had been swallowed into his body, it could only be refined; failure meant immediate death!

With the advancement of the tempering, a blackish-red color began to appear on Lin Ming's body, and a violent energy surged everywhere in his body. Lin Ming's body quickly heated to a scalding temperature, and blood seeped out from his pores, covering him in a shell of red blood, seeming as if it would tear like broken paper at the slightest touch.

From the side, Zhou Xinyu could only watch in shock. Where did Lin Ming resemble a human at this moment? He was like a fish that had been taken out from a pool of blood and then dried out over a fire. The fact that Lin Ming was alive right now was a miracle in itself.

In fact, to swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal at the Pulse Condensation period and still last for over half an hour and already surpassed the scope of Zhou Xinyu's understanding.

However, it didn't seem as if this miracle could continue. Lin Ming's breath was becoming increasingly faint, and whilst he had been painfully struggling before, his struggles were weakening, like a lamp that was almost out of oil. Finally, he stopped moving altogether, his expression frozen in time like a crimson sculpture. His twisted face looked like a suffering soul that had been nailed to an execution column in hell.

Zhou Xinyu's heart began to gradually sink.

In this situation, it was meaningless even if Lin Ming survived. All of the blood in his body seemed to have been drained away. Lin Ming didn't even have strength anymore, not to mention his combat strength.

If he was in a safe and secure room, with the support of many precious medicines and under the care of masters, Lin Ming might have been able to be reborn from this trial. For a mere Pulse Condensation period youth to swallow a Shattered Demon Heart Crystal and survive, his future achievements could be imagined!

However... he wouldn't have this opportunity. He had chosen the wrong place and the wrong time to swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. Even with his talent, this was pushing it too far!

Hong hong hong!

Outside the dreamland enchantment, the attacks of Huang Zixuan and his group began again!

Zhou Xinyu closed her eyes in anguish and took out a coldly shining dagger from her spatial ring. Zhou Xinyu had been prepared for this from the time that Lin Ming had absorbed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. If Lin Ming died, she would commit suicide. If she fell into Huang Sanping's hands, her fate might be worse than death.

The dreamland enchantment began to shake more and more fiercely. In this half hour, Huang Zixuan had been waiting outside of the enchantment, never leaving. During this time period, they would bombard the enchantment every once in a while.

Even though Zhou Xinyu didn't understand anything about array formations or this enchantment, she was still able to see that the

energy that supported the dreamland enchantment was being continuously consumed; it probably wouldn't be able to last much longer.

Ka ka ka –

Because of the violent tremors, the ground under Zhou Xinyu's feet had cracked, and the rocks had broken open. It looked no different than a crushed cookie.

The violent storm of attacks lasted for another quarter hour and then died down. It was probably because Huang Zixuan feared he would consume too much energy, and even if he broke the enchantment, he wouldn't have the strength to stop Lin Ming from escaping. Thus, after every quarter hour of attacks, he would stop and sit down, meditating and restoring himself to his best battle state.

Zhou Xinyu let out a long breath and turned to look at Lin Ming. She was surprised to see that with Lin Ming's terrifying appearance, he had stopped bleeding. It wasn't that his wounds had healed, but rather that he had reached the point where there was no more blood to flow.

His skin blackened red and cracking, his blood charred into a shell of blood, it was like he had gone through the ancient torture of being sliced up and then tied to a blazing copper pillar.

Only that method could mimic Lin Ming's miserable appearance at this time.

If she hadn't been able to feel a faint, nearly invisible breath coming from Lin Ming, Zhou Xinyu would have thought that he already died.

Zhou Xinyu's heart surged with waves of despair. She couldn't depend on Lin Ming. Although he had created a miracle and didn't die after swallowing the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal with his Pulse Condensation period cultivation for an hour, at present, how could he have the ability to fight?

Zhou Xinyu stared at the dagger in her hands. She made her decision. When the enchantment broke, she would first kill Lin Ming, and then commit suicide. After all, the only reason that Lin Ming had ended up in this state was because of her. If she let Lin Ming fall into their hands, his death would be even more tragic.

One hour... two hours... three hours...

Lin Ming seemed dead. Sitting on the broken rock, his eyes dull and lifeless, the only sign that he was alive was the weak fire of life that burned within him.

From the outside, he didn't appear any different than a corpse that was charred in a fire; there wasn't even blood. But throughout Lin Ming's entire body, the marrow was slowly coated in a pale gold color...

Energy tempering marrow!

The moment that Lin Ming's blood had run dry, he had been surprised to find that the tempering marrow process became much easier!

Because his blood was exhausted, the unforgettable pain had numbed his entire body. At this point where it was nearly impossible for him to direct the flow of true essence in his body, he found that the energy that tempered his marrows proceeded at a much smoother pace!

Then, he realized that blood and marrow were originally intertwined. Marrow gave birth to blood, and blood fed the marrow, both of them dependent on each other.

Thus, if one wanted to temper marrow, they had to change their blood first!

It was only when the old blood was drained away, the marrow was tempered, and new blood regenerated, would it be the complete Tempering Marrow process.

Therefore, Lin Ming no longer tried to stop his body's old blood from leaking, letting it cleanly flow out. As for Lin Ming, relying on his strong inner vitality, he was just barely able to maintain the fire of his life.

As the eastern sky brightened in the dawn, the golden color of Lin Ming's marrow became increasingly rich, as if golden flakes were mixed within.

Marrow like golden soup!

At the moment that Lin Ming finished absorbing the medicinal efficacy of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, his new and improved marrow began to regenerate blood.

With the rapid consumption of the origin energy within Lin Ming's body, new blood flowed unceasingly from his marrow.

This new blood was incomparably thick and heavy, just like red mercury flowing in his blood vessels. Wherever this blood went, the wounds would rapidly heal.

The recovery of Lin Ming's body and the production of new blood rapidly consumed Lin Ming's true essence. Although Lin Ming's true essence was extremely thick, over half of it was still used.

However, after the true essence had been consumed to a certain point, the compressed true essence in the Heretical God Seed automatically released itself. The energy of the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder and the Earthcore Crimson Flame were also released along with it. The power of thunder and fire, especially the power of thunder, contained an extremely raw and vibrant force of life.

Legends said that in the most ancient of times, when the infinite universe was in primal chaos, there was no life. It was only when thunder struck the ancient sea were the most primitive of life forms born.

With the raw and lively power of thunder helping to complete the final Tempering Marrow process, a faint purple light appeared in the thick, new blood, as if lightning had fused into the blood.

Lin Ming's body underwent many subtle changes. But, from all appearances, the fire of Lin Ming's life still seemed incomparably weak. His true essence had hidden within the Heretical God Seed – aside from Lin Ming himself, no one else could feel this.

.....

Bang!!

Outside of the enchantment, Huang Zixuan and his group began another round of attacks. Huang Zixuan was already impatient, he hadn't expected that such a fragile looking enchantment would actually be so tough.

“Second Uncle, let's use our finishing blows together, we can't let this drag on any further. It's already been over three hours, if this continues much longer, reinforcements might arrive. When that happens, it will be extremely troublesome.”

Huang Zixuan hesitated. Before now he had always been staying his hand, in fear that even if he broke the enchantment, he would consume too much of his strength and wouldn't be able to grab Lin Ming. Now after so many repeated delays, he had gradually and finally lost his patience. It was just like Huang Sanping said. In the end, this was the territory of the Seven Profound Valleys and that

boy seemed to be some renowned genius from a sect. If they stayed here too long, a master might come to rescue him.

“Alright, let’s attack together!”

Huang Zixuan gave a clear, loud cough, and the black fog around his body began to thicken. His Third Brother and also that short, weak man also began to prepare their finishing blows.

As they attacked together, their strike was like a brilliant comet that cut a shining bright path through the air, smashing into the dreamland enchantment.

Bang!

In the hazy dawn of the valley, a dazzling sun seemed to rise. The earth shook, and massive amounts of rocks and stones flew into the air. Several massive craters dozens of feet deep had appeared in the ground underneath the dreamland enchantment.

The protective enchantment dramatically deformed, like a drifting boat riding massive waves in the high sea. All the rocks around the enchantment had broken, and Zhou Xinyu’s face was incomparably white, her forehead beaded with sweat.

“Try harder!”

Huang Sanping shouted. The one that had used the most effort here was him. After all, regardless of how much true essence he

used, he still wouldn't be Lin Ming's match, so he was able to go all out.

Huang Zixuan frowned. He ignored the energy in his body which was no longer at its optimum level, and grit his teeth as he released another powerful martial skill.

Ka ka ka...

With the sound of cracking glass, the dreamland enchantment that had withstood a massive barrage of attacks for a long time was finally nearly depleted of energy, visible cracks appearing on the barrier.

Seeing these cracks, Zhou Xinyu stopped breathing for a moment. No one wanted to die, especially her since she still had a deep blood feud she wanted to settle. Under this enormous pressure, she clenched her teeth. The reason that she was persisting until the last moment was because she was waiting for some miracle to occur.

Chapter 343 – Broken Bones

However, now that three hours passed, Lin Ming's breath of life was almost at its end, and there was no master that accidentally passed by to save them. It seemed as if... the god of death had cast his final judgement!

Zhou Xinyu bit her lip until it hurt, then she suddenly swiveled towards Lin Ming behind her, thrusting the coldly shining dagger she held into his chest!

Pu!

The dagger pierced through!

Lin Ming was thrust back by the impact of Zhou Xinyu's dagger. At that same time, with an explosion, the dreamland enchantment completely shattered!

How... how could this happen?

Zhou Xinyu was shocked. This dagger of hers was a high-grade human-step treasure. After she poured her true essence into it, she would be able to cut Lin Ming like a piece of tofu, especially since he didn't have any true essence protecting him. But as the dagger slid a third of the way through, it suddenly became stuck in his ribs.

To stab, it would not stab through.

To pull out, she could not pull it out.

However, in this short delay, Zhou Xinyu had already lost the chance to commit suicide.

“You want to die? It’s not that easy!”

Huang Zixuan was like a ghost as he appeared near Zhou Xinyu’s side. His skinny hand grabbed Zhou Xinyu’s wrist, forcefully pinching, wringing the dagger out of her hand. At this time, a thick influx of true essence entered her body, directly sealing all of her meridians.

With a sect peak Pulse Condensation martial artist and a sect peak Houtian martial artist, the difference between the two was just too great.

“Ah!” Zhou Xinyu screamed, her beautiful face paling. A thought emerged in her heart: her true essence was sealed, she wouldn’t even have the chance to alienate her meridians and kill herself!

“Haha, you whore, I wonder where you’ll run off to this time?”

Huang Sanping contemptuously laughed, brazenly looking over Zhou Xinyu’s mature and fabulous figure, his eyes full of immoral and lascivious thoughts. Ever since he had been deprived of his status as the successor to the Sect Master, and then all the overwhelming amount of resources had also gone over to his

junior-apprentice sister, he had regarded her as a thorn in his side. Ever since then, he had wanted to lock her up, then completely humiliate and ravage her to no end.

“Junior-apprentice Sister, I was hoping for this day to come. Finally, you have fallen into my hands. Be relieved, I won’t kill you. I don’t know how many times I wished that I could lock you away, waste your martial arts, and plunder you daily.” Huang Sanping greedily licked his lips; this was truly the most wonderful and greatest event ever. Naturally, as a genius of the Moon Seizing Sect, he had no lack of women swarming around him. But the woman in front of him was different. She was the one that was favored by the Moon Seizing Sect’s Sect Master to be the future successor. Being able to ruin someone with Zhou Xinyu’s status brought him a great deal of excitement and satisfaction.

Zhou Xinyu had lost all color. The situation had changed so quickly that she hadn’t been able to react. How come the dagger hadn’t pierced Lin Ming’s heart, but had gotten stuck in his chest?

Lin Ming’s inner vitality was obviously incomparably weak, and he didn’t even have 20% of his true essence left over, so how could he possibly have blocked her dagger?

No, she no longer had the time to dwell on this. Thinking about the hellish future she would have to live, she only felt absolutely horrified! With her true essence sealed, she didn’t even have the ability to commit suicide. As for biting her tongue to kill herself, even mortals wouldn’t die, much less a martial artist.

“Mm? This fellow?” Huang Sanping saw Lin Ming suddenly lying

on the ground, a dagger stuck in his chest, and his eyes filled with puzzlement. How did he become like this? His entire body was a blackened red; this method of dying was truly tragic!

“What happened to this boy?” Huang Sanping stopped appreciating Zhou Xinyu’s frightened expression as he shifted his attention to Lin Ming.

“He probably swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. How stupid of him. Did he think he could rely on the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal to make a breakthrough in this final moment, and reverse the tables to kill us? Humph! Even if I swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, I will still die when my body explodes from the energy!” Huang Zixuan sullenly said as he sneered.

“Motherf*cker!” Huang Sanping flew into a rage as he heard this, “This idiot! If he dies then he should die alone, but why does he have to touch my precious Shattered Demon Heart Crystal! F*ck!”

As Huang Sanping spoke, he suddenly realized something and then turned onto Zhou Xinyu, his wicked eyes changing into those of a wild beast that wanted to take a bite out of its prey, “You slut, why would you give him the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal!”

As he spoke, he grabbed Zhou Xinyu’s hair and viciously yanked, causing her to painfully scream.

“Slut! Slut! You dare help outsiders! I will let you know what it means to beg for death! Second Uncle, break this slut’s meridians

first and ruin her martial arts, lest she cause any more trouble in the future!” As Huang Sanping spoke, he discovered that Huang Zixuan stood there as if he hadn’t heard him. Instead, his eyes were shifted onto Lin Ming.

Huang Sanping looked down, and suddenly paused; he could feel a faint breath of life coming from Lin Ming’s body.

“This boy hasn’t died!? He’s like this, but he still has life?” Huang Sanping said with surprise.

Huang Zixuan frowned, then slowly said, “To live up to now even after swallowing the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal is really a cause for surprise. Looking at his appearance, he should have already persisted for a long period of time, yet he hasn’t died!”

“Humph! He hasn’t died? Even better. First I’ll tear apart his hand and feet tendons, and then I’ll save him. I want him to experience a life worse than death!” Huang Sanping’s eyes flashed with a bloodthirsty elation. If Lin Ming had died so easily, it would be difficult to erase the hate in his heart.

Huang Zixuan shook his head and said, “It’s useless. Since he swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, he will die without a doubt. Even a Xiantian master with insufficient cultivation will die, let alone this boy.”

“Every moment he can live longer is fine.” Huang Sanping grinned as he walked over, grabbing Lin Ming. First he would feed him some pills to sustain his life, then before anything else, he

would slice Lin Ming's wrist and cut apart his wrist tendons.

Pu!

The saber stabbed down. But, it didn't enter that deeply. The blade pierced down just a bit, cutting apart the blackish-red skin, then was stuck there as if it were mired, unable to enter any further.

"Mm? What happened?"

Huang Sanping frowned. He saw Lin Ming's skin began to rustle as it flaked away like dried scraps of paper being burned away by fire. Then, under that blackened exterior was tender flesh that seemed as if it were from a newborn baby.

As Huang Sanping's blade attempted to cut into this tender pink flesh, it wasn't even able to leave behind a scar.

Huang Sanping looked as if he saw a ghost while he watched this scene. But, he didn't believe in superstitious nonsense. He kept slicing at Lin Ming's body, but each sword was only able to rub off the blackened red skin, revealing the incomparably soft skin underneath, without even a single blade scar left behind.

"Ping'er, fall back!"

Huang Zixuan's expression changed; something wasn't right!

However, his voice hadn't even faded when it was too late. The entire scene suddenly charged. Lin Ming, who was lying like a corpse on the ground suddenly opened his eyes, his pupils colored with a deep glazed fold, thunder shooting out from his sharp gaze.

Lin Ming glanced at the panic-stricken Huang Sanping with indifference in his eyes.

Huang Sanping was someone who wouldn't be afraid even if he saw a corpse jump up from its grave. However, Lin Ming's gaze was too terrifying. It was just like the eyes of a death god, a callous apathy that froze the soul, causing anyone who saw it to shiver.

Huang Sanping instantly paled.

“Ping'er! Hurry up and run!”

Huang Zixuan began to circulate the black fog that covered his body. In that moment, he had felt a terrifying killing intent from Lin Ming's body. He didn't know where this sudden burst of overwhelming vitality came from; how was this even the least bit like a dying man!?

He wanted to give a loud shout as a warning, however, it was too late.

Lin Ming's right hand flashed atop of the horrified Huang Zixuan's palm, clenching down.

Kacha!

The crisp sound of bones breaking echoed in the mountain valley; this was especially clear in the extraordinarily silent morning dawn!

Huang Sanping watched in helpless horror as his right hand was suddenly bent awkwardly, bones protruding from his wrist. For a time, he was silent, in complete disbelief at what just happened.

“Ahhhhh!!!!”

Huang Sanping wailed in pain and desperation. At the same time, Huang Zixuan shot forwards!

“Die!”

In a rush, he wasn't able to think about why Lin Ming didn't die, or how he had suddenly crushed Huang Sanping's bones. His sword thrust forth, directly towards Lin Ming's chest!

Lin Ming suddenly turned around, and his once silent true essence erupted like a volcano, along with the power of thunder and fire from the Heretical God Seed. Lin Ming's momentum had climbed to the extreme!

Lin Ming's right hand flashed with the radiance of his azure true

essence, he reached out and grabbed Huang Zixuan's sword!

Ka ka... zhi zhi zhi!

To Huang Zixuan's imminent horror, Lin Ming had actually seized the sword with his bare hands, and twisted that high-grade human-step treasure with the bare flesh of his palms!

What!?

Huang Zixuan was in utter disbelief. Although Lin Ming's palm was enveloped in azure true essence, it was impossible for human flesh to warp a high-grade human treasure! There were martial artists who were masters at fist and palm fighting skills, but they all covered their hands with treasure gloves. Otherwise, how could the human body possibly compare to a treasure weapon?

In that split-second, Huang Zixuan could no longer reflect on this. As Lin Ming's right hand gripped the treasure sword, his left hand formed a fist.

Body Tearing Bone Shattering Fist!

An immense and brutal vibrating true essence erupted forth like a massive tsunami. In that moment, Huang Zixuan felt like his own body was a single leaf in a giant hurricane – he could be torn apart at any time!

In this critical moment, Huang Zixuan gave a loud shout, and true

essence in his body revolved to the limit, transforming into a sharp sword light that collided with Lin Ming's fist.

Kacha!

The sword light was smashed to pieces and Huang Zixuan flipped backwards like a broken kite, the blood in his body surging. He barely managed to keep his balance as he dropped to the ground, forced to take several steps back. His face was colored with dread.

It wasn't only Huang Zixuan, but the eagle handler, and the Third Brother also had a complete change in their complexion. Just what had happened? How had Lin Ming who was lying on the ground like a corpse suddenly revived? Where did the true essence in his body come from?

And the most startled was Zhou Xinyu. She was the one who had stayed together with Lin Ming this entire time, and was able to see the physical changes of his body. She had seen more than half of Lin Ming's true essence leave his body, and the fire of his life become incomparably weak. Where did this terrifying strength come from?

Chapter 344 – Thunder Breaking Demon Arts

“You... who are you?”

Huang Zixuan looked at Lin Ming, alarmed. Before they had chased him all the way here, in that short instant when they fought, he hadn't been able to clearly see Lin Ming's cultivation. But now that Lin Ming was in front of him, he saw that he was at the late Pulse Condensation period.

For someone who had just entered the Pulse Condensation period to actually be able to swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal with that cultivation and not die, yet also have the strength to suppress him afterwards... was there really such a person in this world?

Lin Ming didn't waste time responding to Huang Zixuan's nonsense. After he swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal and tempered his marrow, his body had to produce new blood. Although he had smoothly entered into the late Pulse Condensation period, the process of creating new blood after tempering his marrow had exhausted nearly all of his true essence. Now the energy he used was almost purely from the compressed true essence that was hidden within the Heretical God Seed. But, this sort of true essence would be consumed quickly. It was equal to opening the Heretical God Force – it was impossible for it to last long.

Lin Ming's right hand shook, the Purple Comet Spear flew forwards!

Azure true essence howled in the air, the space around the spearpoint began to tremble.

Huang Zixuan's complexion sank. He coldly said, "It seems you want to die quickly. You think you won against me with just a single move? Don't force me to use the Moon Seizing Sect's forbidden technique! We'll both die together!"

Hearing the words 'forbidden technique', Lin Ming didn't respond, but Zhou Xinyu's paled. Obviously, this forbidden technique that Huang Zixuan mentioned was not fake.

"Sir Lin, the Moon Seizing Sect's forbidden technique was obtained on the same year they invaded the Silent Demon Emperor City. It's half of a demonic secret skill jade slip that they obtained, 'Blood Shadow Great Technique'. You can kill 1000 at the loss of 800. To use it requires one to sacrifice their life force and cultivation as the price. The power of this skill is astoundingly strong!" Zhou Xinyu quickly said to Lin Ming through a true essence sound transmission. This battle would naturally be determined by Lin Ming, she only wanted to inform him.

Huang Zixuan was able to guess from Zhou Xinyu's facial expressions that she was using a true essence sound transmission to speak to Lin Ming, and then a smug smile appeared on his face. He threateningly said, "Boy, let me give you a tip. Once I use this technique, you will die without a doubt. But, I do not want to injury my life and cultivation. In comparison to my life, the treasures that the Moon Seizing Sect left behind are naturally insignificant! If you are willing to agree to a truce, then I will let

you off. You can even take away some of the treasures. Otherwise... you will die!”

Lin Ming didn't respond to Huang Zixuan with words. The only thing that responded to him was Lin Ming's spear, billowing with the power of rolling thunder and fire!

Hong long long!

Air shook, true essence howled.

Huang Zixuan's face flashed with a hideous expression, “You have forced my hand! Blood Shadow Great Art!”

Pah!

Countless lines of blood suddenly appeared in Huang Zixuan's arms. His true essence fused with the blood, becoming a bloody mist. Suddenly, the black fog that surrounded his body turned into a vibrant crimson color.

Huang Zixuan's eyes turned blood red, the muscles of his hands bulging, his nails extending out like demonic claws. His gaze was full of bloodlust. This Blood Shadow Great Art not only damaged one's life and cultivation, but it would also affect their will. Once they used it, they would not be able to control the desire for slaughter and thirst for blood that rampaged in their hearts.

“Die!”

Huang Zixuan rushed out with a punch. A massive crimson demon claw flew towards Lin Ming, accompanied by the wails and cries of ghosts, and a surge of bloody wind and air.

This blood wind was not an illusion, but was truly blood – Huang Zixuan’s blood.

As Lin Ming faced this massive crimson demon claw, his vision narrowed.

“Hou—!”

A deafening dragon roar impacted the heavens. In that moment, the dragon cry broke the clouds and split stones, the eminent might of a dragon filling the endless space, shocking the minds and bodies of anyone who heard it.

That short moment was like an illusion, like a dream. The Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder that lurked within the Heretical God Seed roared forth, transforming into the shadow of a Purple Flood Dragon as it clashed with the demonic claw.

Bang!

The crimson demon claw broke apart, a shock wave surging in all directions. Broken stone flew everywhere, and all the land within dozens of feet was overturned or razed. But amidst the bloody mist, the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder broke through,

crashing into Huang Zixuan.

Huang Zixuan's face immediately paled, "What kind of thunder is this!?"

The power of thunder was the element that most suppressed ghosts, evil, and demonic beings. During a thunderstorm, ghosts could not be born. Those that cultivated demon arts or ghostly arts were often turned to ashes and extinguished when facing heavenly tribulation during their disaster of thunder. As for the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder, that was a high-level Thunder Soul, and it also contained the peerless and inherent might of a dragon. Lin Ming's blood was also fused with the blood of a True Dragon. How could a little beginner's demon art possibly resist it? Much less Huang Zixuan who only had half of the whole.

Facing the roaring Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder, Huang Zixuan had no time to think. He bit his tongue and spat out his blood essence. The black and red mist transformed into a bloody shield in front of him, blocking the attack of the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder.

Bang!

The shield shattered. Huang Zixuan gave a miserable cry as he flew backwards. Lin Ming didn't give him the smallest chance to catch his breath. He immediately displayed Golden Roc Shattering the Void, and his body flashed as he appeared near Huang Zixuan, his spear stabbing out!

The power of thunder and flame blasted out. Lin Ming used 20% of the true Thunderfire Annihilation!

A terrifying energy rushed out from the spear, forming a vacuum in space. Huang Zixuan's face twisted. He gathered together his final strength to counterattack. He slashed out with his demon claw, avoiding the Purple Comet Spear to grab Lin Ming's rib. Attacking Lin Ming's main body was the only way to force Lin Ming to retreat.

However, how could Lin Ming give him such a hope? Lin Ming's hand loosened and he suddenly stormed backwards, a crimson flaming chain appearing at the end of the long spear. He had shot out the Purple Comet Spear!

Puff!

The Purple Comet Spear easily pierced through Huang Zixuan's body. The 20% power Thunderfire Annihilation didn't explode, but turned into a manic and violently brutal energy that broke into Huang Zixuan's body, tearing all of his organs and meridians into pieces.

Huang Zixuan spat out a mouthful of blood, and desolate hopelessness flashed in his eyes. His dantian wasn't destroyed so he wouldn't die immediately, but he could only live for a few more breaths.

Ka!

The crimson chain tightened, and the Purple Comet Spear was pulled loose. As the spear came out, blood rained on the floor, and Huang Zixuan's corpse fell to the ground.

Seeing Huang Zixuan's blood dye the rock red, the handler and Huang Zixuan's third brother were ashen. They couldn't believe everything that had just happened. An outer court elder of the Moon Seizing Sect, Huang Zixuan, whose strength reached the limit of the Houtian realm was actually killed in less than 10 breaths of time by such a young boy!?!?

The battle was fast, the moves were fierce. It was bewildering and unexpected!

But at this moment, Lin Ming turned his head, an icy gaze shooting out. Everyone that followed Huang Zixuan felt like their hearts had jumped into their throats.

The eagle handler was frightened to the point where he immediately slumped to the ground, but the other two Houtian masters glanced at each other, and without a single word, launched their movement techniques and flew in separate directions, rapidly escaping!

“You want to run?”

Lin Ming sneered, then activated the Golden Roc Shattering the Void movement technique and the Concept of Wind. He would first let that middle Houtian realm master off for now, and chase down the late Houtian man called Third Brother!

Lin Ming's speed wasn't where his strength lay, but that was only relative to those monstrous geniuses whose speed reached the limit, such as Jiang Baoyun. Now, with Lin Ming's cultivation having continuously broken through, along with his understanding of the Concept of Wind having increased, how could an ordinary late Houtian master compare to him?

As the two ran away, Lin Ming soon caught up in just a dozen breaths of time.

A spear thrust forth.

Flow like Silk!

10,000 vibrating true essence threads roared into the area, weaving into an inescapable net, directly blocking the path of the man.

“Ah!”

The third brother gave a desperate cry, his saber slashing down at the azure true essence. However, the azure true essence was infinitely tough – how could he cut through it? Not only that, but as he struck it, a terrifying vibrating force transferred up his weapon, causing his blood to roil and his weapon to nearly shake free from his hand.

“Don't!”

In the moment of life or death, the third brother left out a cry of despair. However, Lin Ming showed no mercy. A spear pierced through the man's dantian, twisting his true essence. The man's dantian broke apart, and he bled from the head, immediately dying.

Lin Ming took the man's spatial ring and then retrieved his spear. He turned towards another direction to chase down the middle Houtian martial artist.

Although Lin Ming's cultivation had reached the late Pulse Condensation period, with his strength chasing one person was fine, but chasing two was a bit troublesome. With Lin Ming's current soul force strength, he wasn't yet able to completely lock onto someone. This vast barren mountain had valleys and stone cliffs everywhere. If this man looked for a place to hide, then it would be very difficult to find him.

However, Lin Ming wasn't alone; he also had the Winged Flood Dragon.

At the same time that Lin Ming chased after the third brother, Chi Yan was following that middle Houtian master. Although Chi Yan was still a child, it also had the strength of a sect's ordinary Houtian martial artist. It was completely able to follow and hound a middle Houtian master.

Once followed by Chi Yan, the man was extremely anxious. With his limited strength, he couldn't do anything about Chi Yan. He

had attacked several times with no results. Instead, he was just wasting his time.

And at this time, Lin Ming arrived. He carried the Purple Comet Spear that was stained red with blood. His entire body was covered with rags, and the aura that he was emitting was the same as a blood-crazy demon.

Seeing him, the man was frightened out of his wits.

“Young Hero please forgive me, I was only forced by Huang Zixuan! I am innocent...”

His voice abruptly ended here. Lin Ming stabbed out with his spear, directly crushing the man’s dantian to pieces!

“Innocent?” Lin Min sneered.

In this world, no one was innocent.

If a man tried to kill others for their own benefit, then they had to be prepared to die in exchange.

To be filled with such bloodlust and excitement when killing someone, but actually proclaiming themselves innocent when they were at the door of death... this sort of person should die sooner.

Lin Ming took this man’s spatial ring, hopped atop Chi Yan, and

flew back.

Huang Zixuan had already died, and all his hopes with him. Huang Sanping's wrist was shattered by Lin Ming. To a normal Pulse Condensation martial artist, a broken wrist wasn't a wound that was fatal. But before this, Huang Sanping had already suffered an extreme attack from Lin Ming, and had spat out a great deal of blood and viscera. Now that there were injuries piled atop his old injuries, he no longer had any strength to resist.

Seeing Lin Ming return, Huang Sanping's face showed a touch of despair and fear, just like a man on the execution grounds who had been sentenced to death.

Few people were unafraid of death, especially those promising talents of sects. Huang Sanping's lips trembled, and his voice shook as he asked, "You... you are Lin Ming?"

Chapter 345 – Reborn

Huang Sanping's lips trembled, and his voice shook as he asked, "You... you are Lin Ming?"

Lin Ming glanced at Huang Sanping in surprise; he hadn't expected that the mewling kid in front of him would guess his identity the moment before his own death. But, it wasn't too difficult to guess. The strength he had just shown belonged to a sect's absolute top talent, and this was also the territory of the Seven Profound Valleys. His name had been floating around for a while, ever since Divine Phoenix Island had announced him as their sole heaven-step talent.

This time, Lin Ming had no need to hide anything. He indifferently nodded and said, "That's right."

"So you were..." Huang Sanping's frightened face bent up in an awkward smile. As he smiled, his face began to twitch, and it looked somewhere between an extremely ugly laugh and a cry.

As one of the geniuses on Divine Phoenix Island's joint talent training program, how could he never have heard the name of Lin Ming, the only heaven-step talent that was listed. A heaven-step talent could enjoy treatment equal to a core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island.

How many people envied?

How many people were jealous?

Huang Sanping had always been an extremely jealous man. When he had heard of this, jealousy had flooded his entire body, incapacitating him. He had always kept a thought in the back of his mind that he would take revenge on Lin Ming one day, but he never thought that...

Genius? How ridiculous!

Huang Sanping had been labeled a genius ever since he was a child. Now, that title, in front of this monster, was nothing more than a joke. In front of this monster, he didn't even have the slightest ability to resist. Huang Sanping always thought that if he could obtain the treasures left behind by the Moon Seizing Sect, then the future world would be his for the taking. He would become the heroic lead of the entire Sky Spill Continent. But now, all his hopes and dreams seemed incomparably comical, a complete farce.

A monster like Lin Ming was able to swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal with a mere Pulse Condensation period cultivation. Against this person, how could he possibly compare to him in any measure?

Lin Ming looked at Zhou Xinyu and said, "Do you want to do it yourself?"

Lin Ming assumed that the resentment and grudges that ran between Huang Sanping and Zhou Xinyu were deep. If she finished this by her own hands, it would be easier for her to clear her

thoughts and spirit.

Zhou Xinyu glared at Huang Sanping with hate seething in her eyes. Although Huang Sanping was severely injured, that still didn't resolve the hostility in her heart. She had almost been captured by him. And if she were, she would have suffered a life of endless torment, being humiliated daily.

Thinking this, Zhou Xinyu shuddered.

Zhou Xinyu grit her teeth, took out a treasure longsword, and stabbed Huang Sanping's heart.

Blood shot out, and Huang Sanping's eyes turned lifeless. As Lin Ming saw this, he sighed; yet another genius had fallen from the skies.

On the path of martial artists, a mediocre person may not have a good life, but a genius could die a miserable death at any time.

Of course, to a sect at the level of Divine Phoenix Island, Huang Sanping couldn't even be considered a genius; he would have been long eliminated before the Xiantian realm.

The Xiantian realm, Revolving Core realm, and even higher realms above, every stage had a vast number of martial artists that were eliminated from advancement. To talents that were even more amazing and extraordinary than Huang Sanping – like Qin Wuxin – they would be stopped after the Xiantian realm. To talents

even more outstanding than Qin Wuxin – like Jiang Baoyun – they might be eliminated from advancing after reaching the Revolving Core realm.

As for talents even more exceptional than Jiang Baoyun – like Mu Qianyu – they might be stopped after becoming a Peerless Emperor...

The path of martial arts was infinite and endless. Lin Ming could feel in his soul that if he didn't seize every chance to enhance his cultivation, then one day, the destiny of being eliminated would fall upon his own head!

After witnessing the inimitable war within the Realm of the Gods, Lin Ming's scope of vision had already transcended Sky Spill Continent and stood on a higher level. He would never be complacent with any achievements that he attained.

He knew that he was just a frog in the well that had taken a brief scenic trip on the outside before returning. Even when it came to the most basic of Body Transformation's realms, the Tempering Marrow boundary, he had only traced the very edge of it.

Lin Ming guessed that in order to fully complete Tempering Marrow, he would need thousands upon thousands of Heaven Opening Pills.

Although the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was strong, a dozen or so of those crystals could not match up to several thousand Heaven Opening Pills. With the help of half a Shattered Demon

Heart Crystal, Lin Ming's Tempering Marrow was only semi-complete. Even with a dozen more Shattered Demon Heart Crystals, it would still be nearly impossible to thoroughly complete Tempering Marrow.

However, in the path of Tempering Marrow, the quality was much more important than quantity. Normally, the first time a pill was eaten would have the greatest effect. Afterwards, the effects would increasingly weaken every time. Although the Heaven Opening Pill was good, after one or two thousand, Lin Ming would reach the limit of its effectiveness; anything more than that wouldn't help.

The Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was a top-level high quality potently powerful pill in comparison to the Heaven Opening Pill, but what effects would there still be if he ate 10?

Lin Ming wasn't sure, but even in a bad situation, he should still be able to complete 60-70% of Tempering Marrow. With that success, he might not even need to fear Ouyang Boyan.

He might even kill him instead.

If this idea of Lin Ming's was known by other martial artists, they might have died from vomiting blood in anger. The incomparably precious Heaven Opening Pill was actually considered being taken in units of 1000; if they weren't struck to death by thunder, they would be irritated to death.

After tidying all of Huang Zixuan's followers, Lin Ming returned

to Zhou Xinyu and begun to search through the spatial rings.

Lin Ming didn't have much hope that these people would have anything too interesting; a third-grade genius' belongings could only be considered change to him now.

After looking through everything, the only objects of notice were several high-grade human-step treasures, the Moon Seizing Sect's cultivation method jade slips, several thousand low-grade true essence stones, and also some bottles of pills. Through everything, there wasn't even a single Heaven Opening Pill.

He didn't know that the reason Huang Sanping had gotten tangled into this mess was because he had given his Heaven Opening Pill to Huang Zixuan to swallow.

The cultivation method jade slips were all given back to Zhou Xinyu. Naturally, he had no need for things like this. He kept the treasures and pills, for future use or if he needed to give them to anyone. As for the true essence stones, they were kept for spending money. As for the rest, Lin Ming didn't have much hope, and his Lin Family didn't need it either. He was preparing to throw it away, but at this moment he took another casual glance and found something interesting.

This wasn't Huang Zixuan's or Huang Sanping's, but it belonged to the weakest eagle handler. It was a very ancient jade slip that contained some sort of technique called the Psychic Soul Art.

In summary, it was a secret method to communicate with beasts.

This eagle handler was a complete mess when it came to martial talent and cultivation, and at 40 to 50 years of age had only reached an early Pulse Condensation cultivation, and that was also relying on pills to forcefully raise it. His combat strength wasn't better than a common martial artist; in fact, it was even worse.

However, because he had a talent that was able to communicate with beasts, he was appointed by the Moon Seizing Sect to handle the golden-winged Heavenly Wind Eagle. It seemed that this eagle handler's talent had a great connection to this jade slip.

Although this jade slip didn't seem very practical, it looked like a lot of fun. Thus, Lin Ming readily placed it in his spatial ring.

"Let's go, we'll look for a cave to rest in. I have to meditate and restore my true essence." Lin Ming said to Zhou Xinyu.

"Mm." Zhou Xinyu timidly nodded. The series of events that just occurred was too shocking for her. Lin Ming, with his Pulse Condensation cultivation had swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal and hadn't died. Not only that, but afterwards he had revived and killed Huang Zixuan in less than 10 breaths of time!

However, there were things that confused Zhou Xinyu. The Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was supposedly a top quality miracle medicine that needed one to be at least a Xiantian master to take; its medicinal efficacy could be imagined. Since Lin Ming swallowed half of one at only a cultivation of the Pulse Condensation period, his cultivation should have rapidly risen, directly breaking through to the Houtian realm. But how did he

only advance by such a small level that he was stuck in the late Pulse Condensation period?

Zhou Xinyu really couldn't understand this, but she tactfully decided not to ask.

The two quickly found a distantly hidden mountain cave.

At this time, the sun had just risen.

Inside the mountain cave there was a deep pool that came from a steadily flowing mountain stream; it was very cool and light. Lin Ming said, "I'm going to take a bath, you can wait for me at the entrance."

Lin Ming's entire body was currently covered in blood and shorn off black and red skin. His entire body was also in rags. Not taking a bath as soon as he could would be a travesty.

"Mm." Zhou Xinyu nodded, and then politely waited at the entrance.

Lin Ming finished his bath in a quarter of an hour, and then changed into some loose and unlined clothing from his spatial ring. He had also eaten up some strong true essence supplementary pills, and meditated for a short period of time. The true essence in his body was nearly restored, and the Heretical God Force's compressed true essence reserves were at maximum capacity.

Then, Lin Ming called Zhou Xinyu into the cave.

When Zhou Xinyu saw Lin Ming after he had trade his clothes and washed off all the bloody scabs and torn skin from his body, she was stunned.

After the preliminary Tempering Marrow, Lin Ming's looks had changed beyond recognition. Underneath the bloody scabs was the tenderest skin, delicate like a newborn babe. His entire body seemed to be brimming with potent vigor, and the slightly bulging and protruding muscles of his body only seemed to accentuate his healthiness and give him an extremely symmetrical and beautiful appearance, just like a graceful cheetah.

His stature had raised some, making him seem even more righteous and tall.

There were even subtly significant changes to his features. Originally, Lin Ming seemed valiant and noble, but in truth that was because there was a sharp aura that came from his forehead. In terms of Lin Ming's looks, he couldn't have been considered too outstanding, but now, after Lin Ming had been reborn, his eyebrows were sharp like swords, his eyes shone like the infinite stars in the sky, and his face seemed to be like the most valuable jade that had been carved by a saber. He was simply a jade-like god, yet not losing any of his sharp fortitude and masculine handsomeness.

All with the simple and unlined blue clothes that clung to his tight and compact body, as he stood illuminated against the rising sun of the morning, and the rays of the dawn sprinkled upon his

comely appearance. He seemed to have an ethereal sense of beauty.

All of this caused Zhou Xinyu to fall into a silly trance.

After several breaths, Zhou Xinyu finally came to her senses. She then haltingly said, “Sir Lin... I... I’m sorry for what I did. I thought you died, so...”

Zhou Xinyu was naturally referring to when she had stabbed Lin Ming’s chest with her dagger. Now looking back at it, Zhou Xinyu only thought she was an incompetent fool, she simply had no merits to speak of.

“Forget about it. I know that you were well-intentioned in your actions. But actually, about the Moon Seizing Sect’s hidden treasures, I was wondering if Miss Zhou could tell me?” Lin Ming’s gaze swept past Zhou Xinyu. When Zhou Xinyu had stabbed him, the truth was that he could have dodged. But, he still had finished tempering his marrow with the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. He also didn’t want to prematurely quicken the true essence stored within the Heretical God Seed; that was the last of his strength.

The reason that Lin Ming had let Zhou Xinyu freely stab him was because he had enough confidence in his own body’s defense after the preliminary Tempering Marrow phase.

“The hidden treasure...” As Zhou Xinyu heard Lin Ming mention this, her face was full of a complex color. She didn’t think there would be a day when the treasures that her master had entrusted to her to revive the Moon Seizing Sect would be personally given to

an outsider by her.

Chapter 346 – Location of the Hidden Treasure

Zhou Xinyu knew that the reason Lin Ming had taken such a big risk and gambled his own life was for the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. If Lin Ming hadn't helped her, she would never have survived this calamity, much less have any hope of reviving the Moon Seizing Sect.

The reason she made this choice was that she had been compelled by circumstance...

Thinking this, Zhou Xinyu felt much better in her heart. She whispered, "I have the key to the hidden treasure on me. As for where it is, it's within the South Sea, located on Dark Moon Island."

"Dark Moon Island?" Lin Ming was stunned for a moment. These past few months, he had read many ancient texts, and had a much better understanding of the major powers of the South Horizon Region, as well as the local customs, conditions, and geography. As for Dark Moon Island, that was a place he had read about. It was a dangerous area within the South Sea, and was the eye of the South Sea's Yin earth pulse. All year round, frost Yin energy was gathered there. It was said that in ancient times, an unparalleled war had taken place on that island, and countless powerhouses had died.

Since then, a bone-chilling wind and a black fog covered the island all year, and many fierce and vicious ghosts and otherworldly beasts existed there. Just the chilling wind by itself

was dangerous for Pulse Condensation martial artists. As for the ghosts and other dangerous residents of that island, there were many powerhouses that were comparable to Houtian masters, and it was even said that there were Ghost Kings that were equal to Xiantian masters.

Thinking this, Lin Ming frowned, “Your Moon Seizing Sect actually placed their treasure trove in such a location?”

“Mm. Well, Dark Moon Island is rarely visited and mostly inaccessible, so it’s much more secure. Sir Lin may not know, but 1000 years ago, the South Horizon Region didn’t truly wish to participate in the siege of Silent Demon Emperor City. Rather, it could be said they were forced too. The might of Silent Demon Emperor City was titanic, not even the entire coalition force together was larger than Silent Demon Emperor City. In that war, the Moon Seizing Sect did have a harvest, but the losses were severe, countless sect masters fell from the sky. If the treasures were kept in the Moon Seizing Sect, it would probably have been looted in the years since then...” As Zhou Xinyu spoke, she let out a sigh. She remembered the glorious and magnificent history of the Moon Seizing Sect, but also their recent destruction; it really made her heart ache.

100 year dynasty, 1000 year sect, 10,000 year Holy Land. For a third-grade sect to last one or two thousand years was already a long period of time.

Lin Ming nodded. Indeed, if it wasn’t so, then the Moon Seizing Sect would have suffered a disaster in their weakened state, and all their treasures would have been looted. “But... even if it’s Dark

Moon Island, can it stop an extreme Xiantian master?”

“An extreme Xiantian master naturally won’t find Dark Moon Island dangerous. However, Dark Moon Island’s black rock can inhibit and prevent soul perception. As long as the secret door is hidden underground, it’s nearly impossible to find. In addition, Dark Moon Island is an extremely vast land. Without a guide, a Xiantian master could spend several years on Dark Moon Island and still not find the location where my sect hid their treasures.”

“I see...” Lin Ming realized that going to Dark Moon Island wasn’t the best choice. If he became confused and walked into danger, things might turn out poorly.

Zhou Xinyu saw Lin Ming’s worries and said, “Dark Moon Island is dangerous, but my sect also left clever techniques to avoid danger, so it isn’t too risky.”

“Then I’ll have to trouble Miss Zhou to guide me at the time... before, I also heard Miss Zhou say that the Moon Seizing Sect’s hidden treasures include a total of 12 Shattered Demon Heart Crystals left over? And there are also many cultivation method jade slips, rare and precious pills, materials, treasure armor and weapons, true essence stones, and so on?”

Zhou Xinyu nipped her lips and nodded. Her sect was a third-grade sect that had prospered for a thousand years. Although they had declined afterwards, they still had a rich legacy and inheritance. The total wealth and resources they accumulated over the years was an amount that was difficult for ordinary martial artists to imagine.

“Miss Zhou, you said that if I helped you, you would share the treasure with me. How about we discuss how we will split the treasure now?” Lin Ming casually said.

Zhou Xinyu’s heart tightened. She was on the extremely weak end of the bargaining table, without any weight to add to her words. If she were forced by Lin Ming, she could say something like ‘The hidden treasure is fundamental to the revival of my Moon Seizing Sect. if you want to take it, then you’ll have to kill me first.’, or something like that.

But now, she had asked Lin Ming to help her on her own initiative, and had also agreed to share the hidden treasure with him. Lin Ming had rescued her multiple times, and during this entire process, she had only added to the chaos without being able to help at all. Because of the above, she was too ashamed to object to anything; she could only hope that Lin Ming’s demands weren’t too rough.

Lin Ming thought for a moment and said, “I don’t want the cultivation method jade slips, nor do I want true essence stones, treasure weapons or armor. If there are some Heaven Opening Pills, then I will take some. And if there are some other treasures that I’m interested in, we can negotiate. As for the 12 Shattered Demon Heart Crystals, I’ll take 10!”

Lin Ming was crazy for these Shattered Demon Heart Crystals; they were the reason that he had risked his life. Those crystals were his hope to further his completion of Tempering Marrow. With 10 Shattered Demon Heart Crystals and more Heaven

Opening Pills, he wondered what percentage of Tempering Marrow he would be able to complete.

Zhou Xinyu listened to Lin Ming's request. Although she was a bit distressed, she knew that Lin Ming wasn't asking for much. Or, it was better to say that nothing else interested him.

Also, she just didn't have any room to bargain further.

The truth was that for the revival of a sect, it didn't depend on a top medicine like the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, but rather the inherited cultivation methods, true essence stones, and a massive quantity of basic treasures and pills. These were the materials that most beginning disciples could use.

She bit her lips and said, "Thank you, Sir Lin."

"Then Miss Zhou, I'll have to trouble you to follow me for the next few days. If you don't mind, could you hand me the key to take care of?" Lin Ming's eyes narrowed. Although his approach was a bit villainous, he couldn't depend on the heart of someone he didn't know. Zhou Xinyu might run off somewhere when he wasn't looking.

As Zhou Xinyu listened to Lin Ming's blatant distrust of her, she became angry. Her beautiful eyes flared at him, and then she finally angrily opened her collar and took out a pendant, throwing it to Lin Ming as she coldly said, "The key is inside, you can take it."

Lin Ming grabbed the pendant and then traced his nose in embarrassment. He awkwardly said, “I’m sorry for offending Miss Zhou, I ask that Miss Zhou be a little understanding and forgive me.”

Lin Ming touched this pendant that carried Zhou Xinyu’s body warmth. It had a very unique shape, just like a ceremonial dagger. As he sensed it with his soul force, Lin Ming was surprised to find that there was a pocket dimension inside. This pendant was actually a storage treasure, just like a spatial ring. Also, the grade was quite high.

Inside was only a single item. It was an exquisite hexagonal box that was colored gold and red, less than three inches wide, just large enough to be placed in the center of a palm. The wood looked as if it were made of metal, but it felt warm, and a full moon was carved onto the surface.

With further investigation, the wood of this key was very strange, emitting an ancient breath. At least, it wasn’t a fake and he wouldn’t have to worry about Zhou Xinyu somehow tricking him while he travelled with her for these next few days.

“Thank you for your understanding Miss Zhou.” Although Lin Ming seemed thankful, he didn’t imply that he was letting Zhou Xinyu walk away.

Zhou Xinyu didn’t speak in anger; it was unknown what she was thinking.

With the atmosphere a bit awkward, Lin Ming cleaned up a corner in the cave to sit down and restore his true essence. Zhou Xinyu also sat down in front of the wall opposite to Lin Ming and meditated too. After revolving her true essence several times, she felt sleepy, and leaned against the stone wall to rest.

She truly was tired; she hadn't yet had a full night of sleep. To a Pulse Condensation period martial artist, a night without sleeping was nothing. But before Zhou Xinyu came here, she had fled through the Southern Wilderness for four to five days without rest until she arrived at Green Mulberry City. Then, almost immediately, the fierce war with the beast tide had erupted, and she had to flee that very night. After that, Lin Ming went through an intense battle because of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, and Zhou Xinyu had to wait with extreme anxiousness for three hours while the dreamland enchantment was slowly whittled away. Now that she could finally relax her guard, she was naturally sleepy.

Zhou Xinyu rested for three or four hours, and when she woke up it was the afternoon. The barren mountain was still the wilderness. While Zhou Xinyu was sleeping, she kept her guard up a bit just in case. Feeling Lin Ming leave, she didn't care that much. As she stepped out of the cave, she saw that Lin Ming had cleared out an open space, built a fire, and was roasting two rabbits.

In these sparsely populated hills, there were few natural enemies, so the rabbits were especially plump. Their entire bodies were roasted gold, and a fragrant smell wafted in the air.

Smelling this delicious aroma, Zhou Xinyu was immediately

hungry. She hadn't eaten for almost an entire day and night.

She was quite happy to eat this roasted rabbit meal. When she finished eating, she licked her fingers in delight. She didn't think that Lin Ming would have this sort of skill; the barbecue flavor was just so good.

Lin Ming got up and said, "Before we go to Dark Moon Island, I'll have to make a number of preparations. So, I'll have to trouble Miss Zhou for these next few days..."

Green Mulberry City –

After the chaos of last night due to Huang Zixuan, the army camp finally discovered one thing – Zhu Ping was missing.

The entire camp searched tirelessly for him, but couldn't even find his corpse. Even the scouts reported that they didn't see Zhu Ping leave the camp. It was as if he evaporated into the air.

When the investigation reached this point, the high level characters of Green Mulberry had a faint guess about what had happened. Zhu Ping had been killed, and it had been by someone who had a grudge against him. For that person to be able to kill him in the camp without raising a single sound, there could only be one.

As Lin Wanshan, Zhuang Fan, Lin Wuyin, and the others realized this, their complexions turned extremely ugly. They didn't have

the qualifications to question Lin Ming's decisions, nor did they dare to, but the problem was that Lin Ming had been chased down by a group of masters and was missing, and their army commander was killed too.

What would they do if the beast tide came again?

Everyone was nervous like ants in a hot pan, until late in the morning of the second day, Qin Ziya and his group arrived at Green Mulberry City on their Heavenly Wind Eagles.

There were dozens of Heavenly Wind Eagles with two or three masters on each. With such a large group flying overhead, the guards instantly panicked, making a report of the chaos to headquarters.

Lin Wanshan and everyone hurriedly ran over.

Heavens!

There were over 100 masters! Looking at their true essence fluctuations, if they weren't at the Pulse Condensation period, then they were at the Houtian realm!

Lin Wanshan and everyone else were shocked. What was going on? In the midst of a raging beast tide, over a hundred masters had actually come. They knew just what this meant. This could be the lifeline of their Green Mulberry City. But, why had they come here?

They didn't recognize the white-clothed man that was leading them, but there were people that recognized the two behind him.

“Those... aren't those two Mister Mui and Miss Qin from the Marshal Quarters?” Zhuang Fan look at Qin Xingxuan and Mui who were standing atop a Heavenly Wind Eagle. He had seen Mui and Qin Xingxuan before. But currently, they should definitely still be at Sky Fortune City.

Chapter 347 – A Storm Is Coming

“Miss Qin from the Marshal Quarters?” Green Mulberry City’s City Lord Zhao Yanming was surprised, “Are you saying that Miss Qin is Qin Xingxuan?”

“Of course it’s her. Although Marshal Qin has many granddaughters, the only Miss Qin that walks with Mister Mui is Young Miss Qin Xingxuan.

Qin Xingxuan?

That was the proud lady of the Marshal Quarters, and also the beloved favorite of Marshal Qin. Why would such a figure come to Green Mulberry City at such a time? And who was that white-clothed person standing in front of Qin Xingxuan?

As Zhaoying was alarmed and indecisive for a time, Qin Ziya asked, “Which of one of you is the leader here?”

Since Zhu Ping died, it was Zhao Yanming who stood in for him. He said, “That’s me. Zhao Yanming, Green Mulberry City’s City Lord.”

“I see, so it’s City Lord Zhao. I am Sky Fortune Kingdom’s Seven Profound Martial House Master Qin Ziya, and these 120 masters with me are also from the Seven Profound Martial House. We seek entrance to Green Mulberry City and would like to request City Lord Zhao make the arrangements.”

‘120 martial artists from the Seven Profound Martial House are coming to Green Mulberry City?’

Zhao Yanming could hardly believe this; this was simply a most propitious event! It had to be known that during this beast tide, many cities within Sky Fortune Kingdom were suffering. Even the capital Sky Fortune City wasn’t able to escape. During this time, the Seven Profound Martial House actually sent 120 masters to Green Mulberry City on Heavenly Wind Eagles, and even Martial House Master Qin Ziya personally came. Just why would this be?

Zhao Yanming felt such a strong sense of happiness that he thought he would faint, and stood stunned for a good four or five breaths of time. Afterwards, he said extremely flattered, “I welcome Martial House Master Qin. I represent all the people of Green Mulberry City in thanking Martial House Master Qin for this timely help.”

Qin Ziya didn’t wait for Zhao Yanming’s kind words. He directly asked, “City Lord Zhao, as far as I know, Lin Ming should be at Green Mulberry City, but how come he isn’t here?” Qin Ziya had sent out his sense a moment ago, but wasn’t able to find Lin Ming anywhere.

“This...” Zhao Yanming’s complexion suddenly turned bitter. Lin Ming’s status was extremely important, and now that he was in trouble, Zhao Yanming feared that something bad may have happened.

He braced himself and explained the entire matter: that there were three or four sect Houtian masters, and even a peak sect Houtian master chasing him. Qin Ziya frowned, but the color of Qin Xingxuan's beautiful face suddenly deteriorated at a distressing degree.

He was being chased by a peak Houtian master from a sect? And more than one!?

Qin Xingxuan felt like her heart was being twisted.

Qin Ziya took out a sound transmitting talisman and spoke a few random words before igniting it, but still wasn't able to find Lin Ming's position. Only a high-grade sound transmitting talisman from Divine Phoenix Island would have the range, otherwise most sound transmitting talisman wouldn't spread more than 100 miles away. Qin Ziya had notified Lin Ming last night through a series of sound transmitting talismans.

"City Lord Zhao, who were they? What sort of special characteristics did they have?" Qin Ziya asked, his voice sinking.

"This lower official does not know..." Zhao Yanming shook his head at a loss. He could only give a vague description, but none of this seemed helpful.

Finally, Zhou Yanming mentioned that Zhou Xinyu had a faint crescent symbol on her clothes, and Qin Ziya understood. They must have been from the Moon Seizing Sect, and somehow Lin Ming had foolishly decided to involve himself in the disputes

between direct disciples of the Moon Seizing Sect.

.....

Throughout the day, there were only a few sporadic surges of the beast tide at Green Mulberry City; there wasn't even a need to utilize the whole army. The 100 plus masters of the Seven Profound Martial House were nearly enough by themselves. Every master was equivalent to at least several hundred soldiers, equaling an army of tens of thousands. Against a beast tide of tens of thousands of second-level vicious beasts, they only needed to send the Houtian masters to slaughter the fourth-level vicious beasts and the beast tide would naturally disperse.

However, even though the beast tide was no longer a problem, the entire army camp still wasn't relaxed, as if a dark cloud had descended on the entire camp. This was because no one knew whether Lin Ming was dead or alive.

City Lord Zhao Yanming and the other heads of the major families came to gradually understand one thing, and that was that the reason Qin Ziya had come this far from Sky Fortune City, and had even brought Qin Xingxuan and Mister Mui together, was not to rescue Green Mulberry City, but to protect Lin Ming's family.

Zhao Yanming couldn't imagine what sort of great show of face this was.

Even the Lin Family Head Lin Wanshan couldn't sit still. He never imagined that Qin Ziya, whose status was higher than the

emperor, would actually rush to Green Mulberry City and protect his family. This awed and flattered him.

But Zhao Yanming was even more nervous. He knew that Lin Ming's status was high, but now it seemed that not only was his status high, but he was of unparalleled importance to the Seven Profound Valleys. He had even heard from Qin Ziya that the Seven Profound Valleys' Total Faction had sent help too. It was only that they were too far, so they weren't able to arrive at the border of Sky Fortune Kingdom quickly enough.

Now that matters had risen to the level of the sect itself, Zhao Yanming naturally found it difficult to understand. He didn't know what a future Revolving Core master, and not only that, but a top Revolving Core powerhouse, meant to the Seven Profound Valleys. Even if Lin Ming wasn't a disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys in the future, being on good terms with Lin Ming would still ensure that the Seven Profound Valleys would experience peace and prosperity for several hundred years.

At this time, Zhao Yanming had already forgotten about the matter of Zhu Ping's murder. He organized guards to constantly search for Lin Ming's whereabouts. However, all his efforts came to nothing.

As Zhao Yanming saw Qin Ziya's increasingly gloomy complexion, he nervously walked circles. Gradually, he began to realize something. If Lin Ming really did disappear and possibly die, then this wouldn't just be a case of simple negligence. No, the consequences would be serious, very, very serious. Even Qin Ziya might be implicated in the entire mess.

Qin Xingxuan's heart was heavy with worry. She skipped lunch as she had no appetite; Lin Ming had already been gone for over ten hours.

Then at around evening, there was a small red dot that appeared on the western horizon. The guards immediately reported this to a master with better eyesight, and he was able to clearly see that it was a red winged dragon. But on the back of this dragon stood two figures, and the one in front was Lin Ming.

With Lin Ming returning, Qin Ziya let Zhao Yanming, Lin Wanshan, Mister Mui, Qin Xingxuan, and everyone else waited at the army camp.

As the Winged Flood Dragon drew closer, Zhou Yanming let out a long breath, and Lin Wanshan was also incomparably excited.

As for Qin Ziya, he was happy and a bit doubtful at the same time. Since Lin Ming was returning so calmly and relaxed, the ones chasing him should have been...

Qin Xingxuan didn't worry about any of this. Finally, that heavy feeling in her heart was relieved. As she considered herself a good friend of Lin Ming, she was supposed to be extremely happy to see him, and of course she had reason to be. But as she took a few steps, Qin Xingxuan slowed to a stop, until she finally stood there, unsure. She saw with her beautiful, unblinking eyes another girl behind Lin Ming, whose looks were no less exquisite than her own...

During the day when Zhao Yanming had explained what had happened, Qin Xingxuan had listened clearly and heard Zhao Yanming say several Houtian masters had attacked the army camp at night for a girl. This girl had no relation to Lin Ming, but he had actually taken action and risked his own life in order to save her...

Qin Xingxuan's eyes turned; she didn't know what to think.

"Young Hero Lin, you truly frightened me to death." Zhao Yanming felt like a giant stone he had been carrying on his shoulders was finally lifted. He nearly collapsed to the ground in relief.

Seeing so many people anxiously waiting for him, Lin Ming was a bit embarrassed. Because he had consumed too much true essence and had also just absorbed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, his breath wasn't yet steady and he had to meditate for a long time. He didn't think so many people would be worried about him.

"Lin Ming, where did you go for such a long time? What happened last night?" Qin Ziya asked.

Lin Ming cupped his hands across his chest in greeting and said, "Martial House Master Qin, I apologize for being neglectful and not returning earlier. It was just that during the battle I used too much energy, so I had to find a cave to meditate in and the delay was longer than I anticipated."

Qin Ziya and Lin Ming walked into tent a together. "Lin Ming,

the ones who chased you were disciples of the Moon Seizing Sect? I heard from Green Mulberry City's City Lord that there was also a peak Houtian master?"

Lin Ming hesitated, and then honestly said, "Yes, that person was killed by me."

Qin Ziya was shocked. A peak Houtian master wasn't much weaker than Qin Ziya himself, but yet this man was killed by Lin Ming? It was hard to imagine this. Did that mean that Lin Ming had attained a strength that surpassed even his own?

Qin Ziya was temporarily unable to accept such a terrifying rate of progress; it was beyond his understanding.

"Martial House Master Qin, I would also like to request that you keep this matter a secret and not publicize that I escaped." Lin Ming didn't want this news to spread to the Seven Profound Valleys' Ouyang Boyan's ear. He wanted to hide his own strength so that his enemy would lower his guard.

"Alright..." Qin Ziya opened his mouth as if he wanted to say something, and then finally shook his head. This boy was just a monstrous genius.

"That's right, Martial House Master Qin, about this beast tide, what response does Divine Phoenix Island have?"

Speaking of this matter, Qin Ziya sobered up. "According to the

news from the Total Faction, after this beast tide ends, Divine Phoenix Island will most likely begin to move against the South Sea Demon Region...”

Qin Ziya sighed. This great war would sweep throughout the entire Southern Horizon Region, rolling up every single player and force within. This time, who knew how many martial artists would have to perish, or how many sects would be destroyed because of this.

However, a war was also a time for geniuses to stand out. Since ancient times, heroes and masters were forged in the fires of war. The South Horizon Region hadn’t seen such a large-scale war for over a thousand years. Perhaps it had been peaceful for far too long...

Lin Ming nodded without a word. Qin Ziya’s words didn’t exceed his expectations. This was probably the effect that the South Sea Demon Region wanted to create. If the South Sea Demon Region actively attacked Divine Phoenix Island, Divine Phoenix Island would have the advantage of their home ground. With the aid of the massive arrays that protected the island, the South Sea Demon Region would suffer serious losses.

But if they pulled them out, this situation wouldn’t happen.

.....

As Qin Ziya and Lin Ming were conversing, a maid was carefully packing away the camp supplies. Qin Xingxuan was just sitting on

the edge of a curtain, staring at the beautiful crimson clouds that were illuminated by the falling sunset. This falling light spread through the entire Green Mulberry Mountains, and Qin Xingxuan watched, spellbound.

“Silly girl, what are you thinking about?” Mui said as he walked over.

“Master!” Qin Xingxuan panicked. She quickly stood up and greeted him as a courteous disciple did. She wanted to find an excuse for sitting there, but she didn’t expect Mui to speak up already, “Don’t tell me you’re worried about the city, and wondering how to repel the beast tide.”

Qin Xingxuan turned red, awkwardly not speaking.

Chapter 348 – A Young Girl's Desires

Seeing Qin Xingxuan's reaction, Muiyi grinned and said, "There are some matters that are too late once you miss your chance; you don't think that boy will approach you on his own initiative do you?"

Muiyi's words that hit the mark caused Qin Xingxuan to not even be able to lift her head in shame. Although the traditions of Sky Fortune Kingdom were on the conservative side, the truth was that there were always many girls that would boldly court those they liked. Back during the grand banquet at Sky Fortune City, Lin Ming had been encircled by mobs of cawing girls. Some of them were pushed by their parents, and some went of their own volition. This situation was common, and elders that saw this would just smile and laugh; it was a perfectly normal situation.

However, Qin Xingxuan had always subconsciously felt that the matters between a man and woman couldn't be forced, nature had to take its course. If one purposefully pushed things, there might not always be a happy ending. She didn't know whether or not Lin Ming liked her in that manner. If he didn't, then it would be an awkward situation for both of them.

Muiyi saw through Qin Xingxuan's thoughts. He said, "Of course, if the tide comes to you, then that's a great thing. But sometimes, if you don't take action and the tide ebbs, it might go and be taken by someone else. Do you remember who Lin Ming came back with today?"

As soon as Zhou Xinyu, the girl that came back with Lin Ming

was mentioned, Qin Xingxuan's words stuck in her throat, speechless...

.....

The beast tide had passed, and Green Mulberry City was safe and sound. Especially in the last few days; because of the help from the masters of the Seven Profound Martial House, there were nearly no losses among the soldiers.

1000 miles away, even Sky Fortune City was safe. Although they were weaker than Green Mulberry City in terms of masters, the Zhou Mountains that bordered the north of Sky Fortune City were much friendlier and more pleasant than the Green Mulberry Mountains which extended all the way to the great swamps of the Southern Wilderness. The highest level vicious beast in the Zhou Mountains were fourth-level vicious beasts. Naturally, they were no match for the masters of the Royal Family, much less, Sky Fortune City originally had 40,000 elite garrison soldiers stationed there. Along with the help from the military nearby, they had an army that was 100,000 strong. With such a massive army encircling Sky Fortune City, there wasn't a single vicious beast that was able to touch the city walls.

However. Besides Sky Fortune City and Green Mulberry City, the other cities that were swept in the beast tide were not so lucky...

These days, Lin Ming lived with Qin Ziya, Qin Xingxuan, and some others at the residence of Green Mulberry City's Lin Family.

Seven Profound Valleys' direct disciple, Seven Profound Martial House Martial House Master, State Marshal Qin's most beloved granddaughter, these titles caused all the country nobles in Green Mulberry City who heard them to feel trepidation and awe.

For a time, the Lin Family became a restricted zone within the entire Green Mulberry City. Although there were countless visitors that hoped to see Lin Ming or maybe Qin Ziya, they were limited because of their status. They weren't even able to enter past the Lin Family gates. At most, they would be able to meet Lin Wanshan.

Lin Ming had gone into seclusion within his room and begun to refine the impurities within his true essence. He had taken too many pills lately and his cultivation had increased too quickly. If he didn't take the time to refine his true essence, it would inevitably affect his foundation.

Besides Lin Ming, Qin Ziya had also gone into seclusion, making the final preparations to attack the Xiantian realm bottleneck.

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Two days later, during a sunny morning, there were many people waiting at the Lin Family courtyard. These included Lin Ming, Qin Xingxuan, as well as the important figures of the Lin Family.

A Heavenly Wind Eagle fluttered down into the courtyard, and after the cover was removed, a little fat youth plopped down, helping a middle-aged couple step down from the Heavenly Wind

Eagle.

This young fat youth was 16 or 17 years old. As soon as he jumped off of the back of the eagle, the fat layers of his body jiggled. He held the arm of a woman with coiled hair, who wore a simple blue silk dress. Although she was nearing 40 years old, she was still beautiful. It was only that her face showed that she had lived a life of work and hardship. Especially when one looked at her hands, they could see that her palms were covered in calluses, and the backs of her hands were rough and red. This was the result of being wet too often in the winter.

Women of this age naturally didn't need help from others. But the little fat youth was still extremely attentive and helpful, supporting her arm as she came down.

The man beside the middle-aged man seemed extremely ordinary. He had a slim, medium build, and he wore a light blue robe. He had a very kind, honest, and pleasant smile.

The fat youth called out from the distance, "Brother Lin!"

Lin Ming stood there. He could see the three people approaching. They were his father, his mother, and also his friend that he had grown up together with and had shared everything. When he was having a difficult time in Sky Fortune City, scraping to get by, it was this brother that cared for him so much – Lin Xiaodong.

Lin Ming didn't know how many times he had imagined this reunion in his mind. When he had taken nearly his entire family's

savings and raised his iron-clad determination to leave home, he had been gone for almost an entire year.

During this time he had withstood unimaginable pressure, and also suffered unimaginable pain. There was surprise, there was glory, there was grief, there was anger, sorrow, slaughter galore, and his own life had hung by a thin thread several times.

He had worked wholeheartedly to fight for his success when he returned, but he also knew that he wouldn't necessarily be able to bring glory back home. Maybe he might have fallen down in the world, and even come back disabled. Not only would he not be able to bring honor to his ancestors, but he would draw the mocking taunts and jeers of his neighbors.

However, what Lin Ming knew without a shadow of a doubt, was that regardless of how he came home – whether it was with riches or rags – his parents would never, ever abandon him, even if he lost everything.

This was the purest and truest love in this world. A love that had no cost, nor was it required to be returned.

Lin Ming wasn't excited, nor did he cry.

He silently kneeled on the floor, deeply kowtowing to his parents.

“Father, Mother, your child has returned...”

.....

Several days passed peacefully at the Lin Family. Lin Wanshan had always wanted to mention to Lin Ming about the matter of visiting the ancestors. According to the rules of the Lin Family, only true Lin Family juniors could burn incense at the ancestral temple, and only true Lin Family juniors could be written in the family tree. Currently, Lin Ming was only a branch member.

Lin Wanshan wanted to raise this matter with Lin Ming several times, but never found the time to say it. Especially after the event with Qin Ziya, Lin Wanshan began to gradually realize just how terrifying Lin Ming's future would be.

Even though Lin Wanshan had never met more than a handful of Houtian masters, he had actually learnt that above the legendary Xiantian realm, there was an even higher realm. And in the future, Lin Ming would be a powerhouse who stepped into this realm. Let alone Sky Fortune Kingdom, or even the entire Seven Profound territory, this character would be an existence that could control all the nearby areas around the Seven Profound territory.

An existence of this level already surpassed Lin Wanshan's scope of understanding. Within the scope of a million miles, population was usually measured in billions, or tens of billions. Lin Wanshan was aware that if his Lin Family was thrown into this land, it would be nothing more than a grain of sand in a desert.

He hesitated to speak of this matter, then decided to wait for Lin

Ming and his parents to pass some days in peace before bringing it up.

Lin Ming's parents lived a very comfortable life these days. Every morning, the couple would go out and meet the always-smiling face of Qin Xingxuan. To this old married couple, she was an extremely pleasant and likeable girl. Her smile was always just right, and she didn't seem to care about status. She was sweet, delightful, and elegant yet restrained.

Qin Xingxuan was often followed by a young maid who carried a box of food, delivering breakfast to the old couple. These were all famous tastes of the capital. There were delicious cakes and many types of desserts. The old husband and wife had worked in a restaurant for half their lives, and as soon as they bit in, they could tell that it was the work of a famous chef.

In the afternoon, Qin Xingxuan would accompany Lin Mu for a chat. Qin Xingxuan's manner of speaking was graceful, and she also had very rich understanding of all the different clothes of different areas; she would often bring Lin Mu to laughter.

Sometimes Qin Xingxuan would send out her maid to bring back several different sets of clothing patterns, and cut them out with Lin Mu. These patterns were all styles that came from famous masters of the capital.

Sometimes Qin Xingxuan would play chess with Lin Fu. Qin Xingxuan was quite good at chess, this caused Old Lin to be full of praise. For such a young girl to have such high skill in chess, he could only compliment Qin Xingxuan for being such an intelligent

young lady.

In particular, Qin Xingxuan understood tea ceremonies. Old Lin loved to drink tea. When he had run a restaurant, he was still considered well-off among the ordinary families. Because of this, Old Lin had drank many different types of tea and had a decent understanding. However, he hadn't yet drank these famous teas from the capital.

Qin Xingxuan had brought a great number of famous teas. Although these teas that cost a few thousand taels weren't considered much to Old Lin now, he still didn't have an understanding of their intricacies. To him, it was simply like a cow chewing on peonies. At this time, Qin Xingxuan would kindly smile, and steep the teas for Old Lin. She would make each kind of tea, then they would smell the tea, drink the tea, enjoy the tea, and she would explain the background and philosophies of the tea. All of this put Old Lin in high spirits.

The old married couple were not foolish. They could well imagine why Qin Xingxuan was approaching them so frequently. Lin Ming was already 16 years old. According to the customs of Sky Fortune Kingdom, that was the ripe age for engagement.

Madame Lin's eyes were bright as she looked at Qin Xingxuan. Qin Xingxuan was beautiful and also smart, well versed in books and principles. She had already been thinking about her.

From Qin Xingxuan's manner of speaking, her appearance and also her experience, she probably came from a noble birth. As Madame Lin asked whose daughter she was, she was surprised to

high heavens to find out that she was Marshal Qin Xiao's most beloved granddaughter! Within the Marshal Quarters, she was the brightest pearl of all. It was said that she was a proud woman that even the Crown Prince was not worthy to match!

To the common folk of Sky Fortune Kingdom, they actually didn't have much of an idea about what the Seven Profound Valleys was. No matter how much others said how awesome or amazing or mighty they were, they would still be confused. But Qin Xiao was different!

Country Marshal Qin Xiao was a figure who had single-handedly turned the tides of war 80 years ago. He had single-handedly supported Sky Fortune Kingdom on his shoulders during the chaos and famine caused by war. His character was unparalleled, and his position was such that even the Crown Prince had to be respectful to him.

The Qin Family was ranked among the best within the entire Sky Fortune Kingdom. Besides the royal Yang Family, even the Allied Trade Association's Zhang Family couldn't compare with the Qin Family. Although the Zhang Family was richer and stronger, they simply could not compare to the Qin Family in terms of status and reputation. Sky Fortune Kingdom's agricultural, manufacturing and merchant professions were all seen by the common folk as humble and inferior professions. Only a family that had a great deal of exploits and heritage could truly be a first rate family.

"Do you think the lady from the Qin Family has taken a liking to our Little Ming?" At night, Lin Mu was speaking to Lin Fu with an expression of disbelief. She had thought that Qin Xingxuan might

be the daughter of some random aristocratic family. These days, there were many dignitaries and other high-ranked individuals who offered their daughters up, even making it clear that they would just be concubines.

Lin Mu didn't think that Qin Xingxuan would actually be the most outstanding granddaughter of Marshal Qin. She knew her son had a high status, but even that legendary Marshal Quarters was approaching them with hints of marriage; it was quite difficult for her to accept.

If a matchmaker from the Marshal Quarters came to propose marriage, then Lin Mu could accept this impossible reality.

But, Qin Xingxuan had personally come. Lin Mu knew when a young girl was acting with and without restraint. For a young girl to appear in public with an old couple, wasn't this forcing their hand?

Chapter 349 – To Inherit

Lin Ming was silent. For a full hour, his mother had discussed marriage with him. As he remembered the hidden bitterness in her eyes, even he felt a headache coming on.

Lin Ming subconsciously tried to avoid love and marriage. This wasn't because he had failed in this field or before. Although Lin Ming was very sad when Lan Yunyue betrayed him, this sadness was more because of himself. He hated that he didn't fight back, and he hated that he didn't have the power to.

Now, these matters had been cleared long ago; it hadn't even left much of a mark on Lin Ming's mind.

Lin Ming would be lying to himself if he said that he didn't have feelings towards Qin Xingxuan, because he did. However, he could not marry her, because he could not afford to shoulder this responsibility. He was destined to leave Sky Fortune Kingdom, leave the Divine Phoenix Province, leave the South Horizon Region, and break through the martial void.

This path was extremely dangerous. A single accident, a single misstep, and he would be doomed. It was impossible to bring Qin Xingxuan along this road, because she would die.

But if he didn't bring Qin Xingxuan with him, and asked that she stay home with his mother, that would also be impossible, because it was just too unfair for her.

The only one with the ability to walk with him might be Mu Qianyu. If she was willing...

Huu!

A flame lit in Lin Ming's room. This was a top sect's specific sound transmitting talisman.

Mu Qianyu's voice sounded in Lin Ming's ear, speaking two messages.

First, Divine Phoenix Island would soon wage war with the South Sea Demon Region.

Second, he needed to return to Divine Phoenix Island within three months and enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.

"Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm..." Lin Ming paused, he didn't expect it to be so soon.

When Lin Ming was listed as the only heaven-step talent on the joint talent training program, he was able to enjoy treatment equal to a core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island, and he was also given an opportunity to enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.

Lin Ming had asked Mu Qianyu just what the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm was. It wasn't a testing zone that was set up by Divine Phoenix Island, but rather a wondrous place that was left behind by the ancient Phoenix Clan.

When one entered the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, there was a chance of dying. The chances weren't high – it was only around 10%. But what was terrifying was that who lived and who died didn't depend on strength, but seemed to be a matter of luck. There were no laws stating who would die or why. The strong could die, while the weak could live.

Of those that came out, some obtained advantages, some obtained increases in strength and cultivation, some obtained valuable materials, some obtained high-grade treasures, and there were even some that obtained the precious bloodline of Saint Beasts.

“Three months... I'll have to see what the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm is like...” Lin Ming sat on a cushion and continued to practice the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, slowly consolidating his cultivation and refining out the pill toxins. Lin Ming's essence gathering cultivation system now relied on the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. The ‘Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians’ was only a Body Transformation cultivation method manual, and was no longer suited for him to practice at the Pulse Condensation period to reach a higher realm.

Like this, another two days passed. Every day, Lin Ming would leave his quiet room and pass time with his family and friends. This day, Lin Ming had just finished eating with his parents, and was playing chess with Lin Xiaodong, when he suddenly heard someone say, “Lin Ming.”

When he looked back, he saw a splendidly dressed Qin Xingxuan.

She was holding a tray of tea in her hands, and was standing against the brilliant sunset, beautifully smiling.

As Lin Xiaodong saw Qin Xingxuan, his plump face wrinkled in a cheap, sly grin, and he deliberately shouted out with great exaggeration, “Oh! I just remembered that I have something very important to do! I’ll be going first!”

As he said this, he speedily scurried away, leaving behind only an awkwardly smiling Qin Xingxuan. She slowly arranged the tea set on the stone table.

It was a lazy day. The sunlight of the bright spring afternoon shined down, glimmering. To sit in a garden pavilion with tea, having some refreshments, with a beauty pouring the tea and being able to view the flowers, this was a fairy-like life.

However, Lin Ming actually wasn’t able to enjoy any of this at the time. Instead, he was somewhat afraid...

Qin Xingxuan unhurriedly rinsed the teacups, steeping the tea. A light fragrance wafted out, refreshing the heart.

“Brother Lin, these past few days have been really distressing for you, right?” Qin Xingxuan whispered as she gently placed a teacup in front of Lin Ming.

Lin Ming paused. Qin Xingxuan had always called him by his full name. She had never been someone who referred to him with such

a distant and respectful title like ‘Brother Lin’. Lin Ming didn’t know why, but he felt a slight twisting pain in his heart.

With the fragrance of the tea filling the air, the two people fell into a silent lull. Slowly, as the teal cooled down, Qin Xingxuan quietly said, “Tomorrow I will be going back to the capital.”

“Mm.” Lin Ming replied, an unhappy feeling in his heart.

Seeing Lin Ming’s expression, Qin Xingxuan suddenly smiled. The radiant sunlight sprinkled on her light yellow dress; it was utterly compelling to the human eye. She said, “Brother Lin, these days I’ve been thinking about many things. And, it seems that there are some matters that are destined to not be right. For instance, several hundred years from now, when I become an old lady, even I won’t be able to tolerate it...”

Qin Xingxuan’s voice seemed to have a jokingly playful tone that was masking the bitterness in her heart, causing Lin Ming to be very uncomfortable. Several hundred years from now, Lin Ming’s looks wouldn’t have changed too much. As for Qin Xingxuan, it would be extremely difficult for her to break through to the Revolving Core realm. Several hundred years from now, she might already be reaching the end point of her life.

Just this point caused these two individuals to live in separate worlds, unable to be together.

This was the matter that Qin Xingxuan mentioned she wouldn’t be able to tolerate; she absolutely did not want such a scene.

An afternoon tea was drank for less than half an hour. The tea still had a fragrant smell, but it seemed to have a bitter taste to it that pained the heart.

Even after Qin Xingxuan left, Lin Ming was still in a daze. Thinking of her beautiful face gradually waning under the knife of time, Lin Ming felt his heart pained with regret.

Only if...

Suddenly, Lin Ming's mind shook. Qin Xingxuan wasn't even 16 years old yet, and her cultivation was at the mere Bone Forging stage. If she tossed aside all of her current cultivation and retrained from scratch, then...

Lin Ming had already completed the preliminary true essence physical transformations stage of the 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians'. As for the 'True Primal Chaos Formula', Lin Ming had reached Large Success of the third layer. That was the main true essence revolution method of the 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians'. With this foundation, he might try to engrave this knowledge of the 'True Primal Chaos Formula' onto a jade slip.

If he could leave some cultivation methods and inheritances of the Realm of the Gods to his own wife and future children so that they could become stronger, only in that way would Lin Ming have true peace of mind. With Qin Xingxuan's sixth-grade talent, if she learned some of the legacies of the realm of the Gods, and also had a few lucky chances, then reaching the Revolving Core realm

should be nothing at all.

In the future, Qin Xingxuan might even be of great assistance to him.

With his mind set, Lin Ming entered the quiet room, took out a blank jade slip, and began to engrave the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’. Engraving a cultivation method manual was an arduous and exceedingly complicated process, and the person engraving and to be very proficient in this cultivation method. This was also the reason that cultivation method jade slips were so incomparably precious.

Lin Ming spent a full afternoon and night to finally engrave the first half of the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’. Of course, there were many flaws and some omissions, but this was the best that Lin Ming could do, unless he could cultivate the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’ to Perfection.

If Qin Xingxuan practiced this cultivation method, she would have to take many detours and it would be much more difficult than when Lin Ming had practiced it. But, it was far superior to practicing the third-rate cultivation methods of the Seven Profound Valleys.

At midnight, the oil lamp in Qin Xingxuan’s room was still shining brightly. She was cultivating on her bed, but her heart wasn’t calm. She envied Mu Qianyu to the bone; if only she had her talent and strength...

Qin Xingxuan was not afraid of aging, nor did she wish for immortality. What she feared was that when her husband still seemed to be a strapping, handsome young man, she would be a white-haired granny. To her, this was an incomparably scary and horrifying future. Even if her husband could accept this, she could not.

The door sounded, it was Lin Ming.

Qin Xingxuan was stunned. It wasn't polite to enter a woman's room late at night, especially if it was seen by others. This must be an extraordinary matter.

Qin Xingxuan carefully welcomed Lin Ming into her room, puzzled. She asked, "Brother Lin, is there an urgent matter?"

"For you."

Lin Ming didn't speak any idle chatter. He took out a jade slip and placed it on the table.

Qin Xingxuan picked up the jade slip, it was still warm to the touch. This jade slip was obviously newly engraved, otherwise it would have already been polished smooth by the touch of hands.

As she slipped her sense into the jade slip, Qin Xingxuan was stunned. She continued to look carefully. After a quarter of an hour, Qin Xingxuan withdrew her sense, shocked, and glanced at Lin Ming with incredulity in her eyes.

Although Lin Ming hadn't engraved the entire 'True Primal Chaos Formula', with Qin Xingxuan's intelligence and talent, she already realized how precious this cultivation method was. It was absolutely more precious and rare than any core cultivation method of the Seven Profound Valleys.

"This... this cultivation method is..." Qin Xingxuan's voice trembled as she spoke. Maybe this incomparably precious cultivation method was obtained by Lin Ming when he risked his life in some ancient ruins somewhere. How could he so easily give this away?

Now, giving this to her was a commitment, a promise and a pledge. It was much more reliable than sweet whispered nothings and words of love.

There was no need to say anything anymore.

For a time, many chaotic thoughts surged into Qin Xingxuan's mind. It was so sudden that she wanted to cry.

Lin Ming said, "This cultivation method is only a part. I don't have the original jade slip, I can only practice. This matter is very difficult to explain. I just want to say that this cultivation method is extremely important, and it is imperative that it remain confidential. Otherwise, it will provoke a calamity. Afterwards, when I have the ability to engrave the rest, I'll do so and give it to you. Everything's for you."

Qin Xingxuan held the jade slip close to her bosom, her lips pursed as she gazed at Lin Ming. Lin Ming's eyes were soft and gentle, broad and warm. Looking at him, she couldn't help but close her eyes, her eyelashes trembling.

After Qin Xingxuan calmed herself down, she opened her eyes and said, "I won't tell this to anyone."

"Give up the cultivation method you were practicing, and take this 'True Primal Chaos Formula' as the foundation, retraining yourself through Strength Training, Flesh Training, Viscera Training, Altering Muscle, and Bone Forging. Remove all the impurities of your body and refine the tempered true essence from your body. This is the only way you can reset your foundation."

Lin Ming didn't plan on having Qin Xingxuan learn Tempering Marrow. The conditions for Tempering Marrow were simply too difficult, thus the reason why he would teach Qin Xingxuan the foundation 'True Primal Chaos Formula'. As long as Qin Xingxuan built up the foundation and continued to practice an essence gathering system, everything would be possible. Later, when Qin Xingxuan swallowed pills, he could also use his Flame Essence to help her rid her body of impurities.

With this matter complete, Lin Ming was extremely happy. In that moment, it was as if a great amount of pill toxins in his body had disappeared.

With no more worries, Lin Ming would go to Dark Moon Island, and take the hidden treasures of the Moon Seizing Sect.

Chapter 350 – Dark Moon Island

There were many dangerous locations within Sky Spill Continent, and there were countless places where Xiantian masters had perished. There were even many dangerous places that would be fatal to Revolving Core masters.

Relatively speaking, Dark Moon Island wasn't much of a dangerous land; at most, it was threatening to Houtian masters. When a true Xiantian master came, they naturally wouldn't be threatened by an existence like the Ghost King. In fact, even if a Xiantian master and the Ghost King met, chances were that the two masters wouldn't fight each other. With two strong beings fighting, there would definitely be injuries on both sides. If it wasn't for some great treasure or benefit, then naturally there was no need to risk a life or death battle.

With Lin Ming's current cultivation, it was still dangerous coming to Dark Moon Island. But with the Moon Seizing sect's secret skill to hide one's breathe, the chances of being found by the Ghost King were slim.

Before coming to Dark Moon Island, Lin Ming also visited Huoluo Nation's Seraphic Pond along the way.

This was from a bet that Huoluo Nation's Seven Profound Martial House Master Liang had lost before. But because Lin Ming had been constantly busy dealing with other matters, he hadn't had time to visit Huoluo Nation.

Now that he was going to Dark Moon Island, he just happened to pass by.

With Lin Ming's arrival, even though Martial House Master Liang loathed to do so with all his heart, he still had to treat him with utter respect, and show an expression of awe and amazement.

This was something he couldn't help. Lin Ming's current status was too terrifying. Let alone Martial House Master Liang, even his backer at the Seven Profound Valleys had to treat Lin Ming with respect.

Huoluo Nation's Seraphic Pond certainly had its own good points. Its water was like a fine jade nectar, and as he scooped up a handful, it was incomparably clear and even a bit sticky. As he held it in his hand, it didn't leak through his fingers.

As Lin Ming plunged into the pond, his entire body was comfortable. He took a deep breath, and then dove straight to the bottom and sealed away all six of his senses. He was just like a baby suspended in his mother's womb.

Lin Ming didn't intend on being polite. He swallowed big gulps of the fine nectar-like water, and let the water flow through his body. Then, black oils began to discharge from all the pores of his body, and the foul Houtian air in Lin Ming's body left along with it. A pure heaven and earth origin energy flowed through his meridians, and a part of it stayed within.

Slowly, Lin Ming began to realize the benefits of the Seraphic

Pond. The thin origin energy of the Seraphic Pond couldn't be compared to a top quality pill, but this sort of thin origin energy actually had a purifying effect on the impurities in his body; this was just to Lin Ming's liking.

While underwater, he immediately began to revolve the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle', manipulating the Fire Essence so that it burnt off small amounts of pill toxins.

Lin Ming soaked in the Seraphic Pond for an entire day, using up all of the heaven and earth origin energy that had been saved up within the Seraphic Pool for half a year. The anxious Martial House Master Liang could only bear the pain as his heart bled, and cheerfully smile as he waited for Lin Ming to finish.

Finally, at sunset, Lin Ming stepped out of the Seraphic Pond and dried his wet hair. Martial House Master Liang forced out a smile, and had a maid bring Lin Ming a dish of fruits.

There was no need to kick a person while he was being so polite. Like this, all matters between Lin Ming and Martial House Master Liang were settled.

After he left the Seraphic Pond, Lin Ming's cultivation hadn't increased – it was still at the late Pulse Condensation period. It was only that many of the pill toxins in his body had been cleared. Although it had a wonderful effect, half a year of the Seraphic Pond saving up heaven and earth origin energy was only enough to soak a single time. This was somewhat useless; no wonder the Seven Profound Valleys had let Huoluo Nation's Seven Profound Martial House take over the Seraphic Pond.

These days, Zhou Xinyu had been very silent. When she had been in the Lin Family residence, she had usually stayed in her room, not leaving.

As the two crossed the sea, the color of the sea became increasingly deep. Lin Ming probed the sea with his perception. The bottom of the sea had already surpassed the limit of his sense, and was over half a mile deep.

It was said that in the deep regions of the South Sea, the sea went down hundreds of thousands of meters. This was at the Rue Abyss, and horrible terrors lived there—massive vicious beasts of the sea. For instance, there were rumors of the Giant Leviathan Saint Beast, a creature that was said to be tens of thousands of feet long. Of course, no one knew the veracity of these rumors.

“Is that Dark Moon Island ahead?” Lin Ming stood on the Winged Flood Dragon and asked Zhou Xinyu as he pointed at a gray shadow in front.

Zhou Xinyu nodded, “Mm.”

When Lin Ming saw Dark Moon Island with his own eyes, he realized that it was much larger than he had imagined. As he stood tall above the Winged Flood Dragon, he quickly passed a few hundred miles. The land below him was completely dark red, with a chilling black fog swirling above it. From above, it was impossible to see anything.

“How big is Dark Moon Island?”

“At least a few thousand miles long and wide, I don’t know the specifics.” Zhou Xinyu casually said.

Lin Ming let out a light breath. A range of a couple thousand miles wasn’t much smaller than the entire territory of Sky Fortune Kingdom. He had heard that Dark Moon Island was just a normal island of the South Sea. If he had to speculate, then it was very likely that the main islands of Divine Phoenix Island and the South Sea Demon Region were tens of thousands of miles long and wide.

Was that still an island? Even calling it a mini continent wasn’t an exaggeration.

After some reflection, it realized that this was natural. If it really was a small land, then it wouldn’t be able to support such great powers.

“Let’s go down, it should be near.” Zhou Xinyu took out two symbol papers from her spatial ring and gave one to Lin Ming. “Pour some true essence into this and stick it to your body. It will isolate the vitality in your body so that you won’t be bothered by ghosts and demons.”

Lin Ming received the yellow symbol paper and saw that a strange red mark was drawn in the center of symbol paper. This was most likely a blood curse. This was likely from the same area of inscription symbols, and also another skill domain unknown to Lin Ming.

As he poured true essence into the symbol paper, the symbol paper burnt away and formed into a red line of blood that sunk into Lin Ming's body. The power of Lin Ming's blood vitality was instantly hidden, and his originally healthily tanned and exquisite skin was now pale with an ashy color. His body temperature was ice cold, and an aura of death was emanated. This symbol paper had caused a strapping young boy that was brimming with blood vitality to look like a dying man.

“What an impressive method.” Lin Ming was thoroughly impressed. According to ghost stories, ghosts loved to eat blood vitality. It was said they could smell a stranger's blood vitality from dozens of miles away. If a person's blood vitality was sealed so that they were no different from a corpse, then naturally these ghosts wouldn't come looking for food.

“It's just an insignificant skill. The Moon Seizing Sect didn't refine weapons or set down arrays; all they were good at were symbols. Whether they were offensive symbols, defensive symbols, or inscription symbols, they were skilled in them all.” Zhou Xinyu sighed as she spoke. She was sad as her heart remembered all the inheritances and legacies of her sect that had been destroyed.

“Oh? They also understood inscription symbols?”

“Mm. My master Shui Yue was an inscription grandmaster.” Zhou Xinyu spoke and no longer dwelled on this. She lit the symbol paper in her hands, and soon her blood vitality was sealed. Her rosy face turned white like paper, and she gave off a feeling as if she was ill with several terminal diseases.

As the two went down and set foot on the land of Dark Moon Island, they immediately felt a chilling wind, seeing only an endless black fog wherever they turned. If a normal mortal were to come into contact with this sort of black fog, they would immediately die from corpse poison, and then turn into a zombie, becoming an undead slave of the land.

Even a Pulse Condensation period martial artist couldn't stay out here for too long. If they weren't able to supplement their true essence with pills, then the true essence around their bodies would fade, and they'd be poisoned to death.

This was the first time that Zhou Xinyu had come here. She carefully advanced forwards, holding the jade slip in her hands and constantly comparing the contents to the environment.

Not to mention the ghosts that lived in the black fog, the black fog also carried the faint sounds of ghosts crying. Even the land of Dark Moon Island was creepy; it was all a dark crimson red, as if massive amounts of blood had been spilled here. Lin Ming tried to send out his perception to check and see if he really couldn't penetrate the ground, but as he did so, he quickly drew his soul force back. The red rock was just like a sponge that absorbed water.

The ground everywhere was covered with half-foot tall stalagmites, every one of them incomparably sharp, just like the fangs of a red demon. If a mortal wasn't careful, they could fall and impale themselves on a stalagmite. Their intestines would be punctured, and their stomach would soon rot.

After walking such a long distance, they still hadn't seen a living creature. They only saw some scattered bones everywhere, and over some of these bones were flowers. These flowers were a deep bright red, as if they were made of blood. The flowers had no leaves, only thick and countless roots that dug deep into the corpses, sucking out all of their nutrition.

The air was rank with a mixed smell of blood and sulfur. The deeper they went, the stronger this smell was. This strangely cold wind seemed to directly penetrate their bodies, and seemed just like a knife that was scraping against the soul.

Lin Ming didn't feel much, but Zhou Xinyu seemed like she couldn't persist much longer. She had even pasted a few blood symbol marks on her body, but she couldn't stop shivering, her arms subconsciously grasping her own body. At this time, Zhou Xinyu's response was just like a thinly clad and fragile mortal girl who was standing in the cold.

Lin Ming breathed out a light breath and with a flick of his fingers, sent several threads of azure true essence into Zhou Xinyu's body. The azure true essence's power and endless vitality bloomed, and the chilling Yin wind was expelled. As they walked, Zhou Xinyu felt several warm currents echoing in her body, keeping her limbs warm. With the chilling ghost wind expelled from her body, Zhou Xinyu turned and was surprised to see Lin Ming already receiving his hand. As for those several threads of true essence, they remained in her body without even the slightest bit of dissipation.

This caused Zhou Xinyu to be surprised. Normally, the true essence that a martial artist released would dissipate once it lost the support of the body's soul force; it would slowly unravel out of control, and then slowly dissipate. Without the support of soul force, the true essence would become uncontrolled and gradually dissipate. To help protect someone from the chilling wind, someone would need to place a hand on her back and continuously input true essence.

But none of this applied to Lin Ming. That strange azure true essence he released seemed to have a life of its own, continually destroyed the chilling Yin mist. As more and more of the black mist was being destroyed, his consumption of energy was actually very little.

As long as more than 50% of Zhou Xinyu's true essence was consumed, Lin Ming would flick his fingers and send two more threads of azure true essence into her body, completely eliminating all of the chilling air in Zhou Xinyu.

"Thank you." Zhou Xinyu whispered.

"Don't worry about it. It's been quite a bit of time hasn't it?" The two had already used almost an hour to search around.

Although Zhou Xinyu had a map in her hands, identifying the direction in which they were travelling in such a thick black mist wasn't easy. Especially since this was her first time coming here, and she wasn't able to use her perception to sense the surroundings.

Zhou Xinyu said, “If I’m not wrong, it should be in front of that stone wall.”

Lin Ming looked up. The stone wall that Zhou Xinyu had mentioned was less than a hundred feet away. It was just like a red monster that was hidden in the black fog.

“The entrance should be in the stone wall.” Zhou Xinyu said with confidence as she compared once again with the jade slip.

Chapter 351 – Entering the Treasure Storeroom

In front of Lin Ming was a rock wall several hundreds of feet high; it was a steep cliff that looked like it was carved from a saber.

Zhou Xinyu crouched in front of the wall and took out a red symbol paper, then began to feel along the wall bit-by-bit until runes on the red symbol paper began to flash. Carefully, Zhou Xinyu pasted the symbol paper onto the wall, and a short time after, the symbol paper began to burn.

After it burned to ashes, there was a crackling sound along the stone wall as a palm-sized hexagram hole appeared in the cliff.

Lin Ming swiped his spatial ring and pulled out the reddish-gold hexagonal key box and handed it over to Zhou Xinyu.

Zhou Xinyu pressed gently on the center moon symbol of the key box and watched as it began to expand with a snapping sound. Six triangular pieces of metals stuck out from the edges of the box, turning the box into a hexagonal shape that matched the hole on the wall.

Then, Zhou Xinyu fit the key box into the hole, twisted halfway to the left, and stepped back. After several breaths of time, a white curtain of light flashed on the red cliff, and then enveloped Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu.

Lin Ming could see that this curtain of light with an illusory magic array enchantment that was used to prevent others from peeking in.

Within the magic array, Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu looked as if they had vanished from where they stood, and only the original cliff remained.

But within the magic array, the deep red rock rumbled and moved, revealing a human-high hole that extended in a red stairway all the way down into the darkness.

Zhou Xinyu glanced at Lin Ming and walked in first. She saw that Lin Ming hadn't been too trusting of her, so she decided to be a bit generous and lead the way.

The stairs stretched down for a few hundred feet before they came to an end. There, they saw an altar with an array engraved in the middle. Around this array formation were 18 low-grade true essence stones.

To use a short distance transmission array, normally a few low-grade true essence stones were enough. Lin Ming saw that these true essence stones still had more than half their energy remaining, and thought that Zhou Xinyu would immediately start the transmission array. However, she slowly picked up 12 of the 18 true essence stones and switched six with medium-grade true essence stones and the other six with impure lowest-grade true essence stones. Each of the true essence stones were placed in different positions that were matched with a chart in the jade slip.

This caused Lin Ming to be secretly speechless. If one didn't know the true essence arrangements and opened the transmission array hastily, then they probably wouldn't have a good ending.

Especially because of those six impure true essence stones that cost four to five hundred gold each; those were true essence stones that only common martial artists would use. A sect genius would never bring those along with them.

“Come on.” Zhou Xinyu said to Lin Ming.

After Lin Ming carefully observed the transmission array for a moment, he was able to understand the principles behind it. After he confirmed that there wasn't a problem, he stood on the altar.

The array formation started, and the 18 true essence stones began to glow. Lin Ming felt startled for a moment, and then suddenly appeared in an enclosed main hall. There was a damp and dull feeling in the air; Lin Ming guessed he was underground – very deep underground.

To have the treasure storehouse built here and only be connected to the outside world with a transmission array was truly very subtle and secretive.

The main hall was 300 feet wide, and the fluorescent materials were lined up on the walls. A dim green light illuminated the hall, allowing Lin Ming to clearly see what was there.

There were four or five separate rooms that were divided by walls, and also rows of wooden shelves. These shelves had armor, weapons, jade slips, and several boxes as large as a person. Besides the boxes there were also stone doors, it was unknown just what those stone doors were for.

“Will anything happen if I open the box, like traps?”

Lin Ming asked Zhou Xinyu. Zhou Xinyu’s head still hurt at this moment. After passing through space via the transmission array, she wasn’t able to adapt to that strange feeling so quickly, so she stood there rubbing her temples. After she heard Lin Ming’s question, she stopped.

“No. If you’re worried, I can open them for you.” Zhou Xinyu’s voice was a bit icy.

Although Lin Ming could hear the resentment in Zhou Xinyu’s heart, he still had her open the box as she suggested. The Moon Seizing Sect used to be a top third-grade sect after all. In the sect, there were many Xiantian masters. Any one of them could create a trap or curse that could instantly kill him.

Pa! Pa! With the sound of two golden locks opening, Zhou Xinyu opened the closest two boxes.

In these two boxes were rows of true essence stones. Not only that, but they were pure medium-grade true essence stones, and there were several thousand of them; this was just a fortune.

Facing all these true essence stones, even Lin Ming's heart stirred a bit. However, he had agreed that he wouldn't take any true essence stones, so he naturally didn't covet them.

Zhou Xinyu looked at these shining medium-grade true essence stones and silently took several hundred of them into her spatial ring, then covered up the rest. After all, this secret chamber was still the safest place for them to be. It wouldn't be safe to bring such a great wealth outside.

Zhou Xinyu was clearly planning on using these true-essence stones to cultivate. A few hundred medium-grade true essence stones for a few months of practice was not a waste of wealth that the Moon Seizing Sect would ever splurge on. However, they naturally weren't able to manage this anymore.

As the third, fourth, and fifth box opened, inside were bottles upon bottles of pills.

There were Crimson Gold Dragon Marrow Pills, Black Jade Tiger Bone Pills, Golden Snake Scarlet Pills, Blue Miracle Pills, and also many other kinds of expensive pills, all placed in large quantities. Any one of these pills were treasures that common martial artists would wish for in their dreams. For instance, the Crimson Gold Dragon Marrow Pill was what Lin Ming had obtained for becoming first place candidate in the Seven Profound Martial House's entrance examination. After putting so much effort in, he had finally obtained one in a jade box. That pill couldn't be bought in a mortal city, and it had caused the envious gaze of many others to fall on him.

But now, the Crimson Gold Dragon Pill and other pills of that level were gathered in in massive jars; it really caused Lin Ming to feel a bit melancholic.

After rummaging through the medicine box, Zhou Xinyu pulled out a box of pills. The box itself was made from Millennium Artic Jade, and it had a unique chilling aura. If a pill were stored inside, then none of the pure heaven and earth origin energy of the pills would dissipate.

As his soul force swept out, Lin Ming was able to probe just what was inside – Heaven Opening Pills.

He didn't think that there would be many, there looked to be around 30 or so. There was just too great a need for Heaven Opening Pills. Normally, a sect would keep a large batch of Heaven Opening Pills in storage and slowly pass them out as the next batch was being prepared in the furnace. Most of these pills would be used to strengthen the sect – only a few dozen would be left behind for emergencies.

“I want half.” Lin Ming simply said.

Zhou Xinyu didn't bargain with him. She opened the Arctic Jade box and counted out 18 Heaven Opening Pills, handing them over to Lin Ming.

The last box was entirely red, and also the smallest. There was a small lock on top.

To martial artists, a metal lock could simply be broken open. But, Lin Ming didn't think this lock was so simple. If it wasn't handled properly, it might be destroyed along with everything inside.

Zhou Xinyu carefully took out another key and opened the lock, and then slowly lifted the box's top. The box was mostly empty, but on the bottom were 12 bottles carved from blood jade.

Lin Ming took deep breath. He didn't need to probe with his sense to guess just what was in these 12 blood jade bottles.

Shattered Demon Heart Crystals!

These small treasures were what Lin Ming had risked his life for, and also what had caused his body to almost explode.

"As per our agreement from before, I'll take 10!" Lin Ming's voice was a bit excited. With these Shattered Demon Heart Crystals, he would be able to further consolidate his cultivation and continue tempering his marrow; he could even do so in this stone chamber!

Zhou Xinyu clenched her teeth, then eventually took out 10 of the blood jade bottles and handed them to Lin Ming. The remaining two were left inside the box.

This empty box had once held 72 Shattered Demon Heart Crystals. Now, there were only two left...

With the blood jade bottles in his hand, Lin Ming could clearly feel an ancient breath emitting from them. And also the remaining thoughts of the Netherworld Great Emperor's indomitable will.

These were the key to his Tempering Marrow!

As he carefully put away the 10 Shattered Demon Heart Crystals, Lin Ming's goal for coming here could already be considered successfully completed. As for the treasures and jade slips on the shelves, Lin Ming wasn't very interested in them.

As he swept past the jade slips with his perception, most of them were cultivation methods. As for the treasures, most were medium-grade human-step. There were also a few earth-step treasures, but Lin Ming didn't take a fancy towards any of them.

Finally, he used his perception to look at the several stone rooms. He didn't have much hope for anything, but after seeing what was inside, Lin Ming was actually a bit excited.

Among the rooms, there were some very interesting things.

Lin Ming strode over and checked inside, then gasped.

These were inscription materials! Every room was full of inscription materials!

That's right! The Moon Seizing Sect used to be a sect that excelled in symbol techniques. No matter whether it was

inscription symbols, offensive or defensive symbols, the Moon Seizing Sect was skilled in them. Zhou Xinyu's master Shui Yue was also an inscription grandmaster. In the Moon Seizing Sect's hidden treasure trove, it would make sense to have so many inscription symbol materials.

As he made a cursory glance over these materials, Lin Ming was jubilant with happiness. These materials were all rare and precious types; collecting them wasn't easy at all.

The value of these materials wasn't too obscene, but collecting them was difficult. Something like the Heaven Opening Pill – as long as one paid a high enough price – could certainly be bought from any sect. But inscription materials were different. They were just too limited in quantity. Besides some sect professions, it was impossible for a seller to find buyers, or for a buyer to find sellers.

Therefore, many inscription associations built warehouses to store materials and collected a massive amount of them. Whether or not it was useful at the moment, they would store it inside. The Moon Seizing Sect was also like such. These materials had accumulated for over a thousand years.

For the past half year, Lin Ming's inscription technique had stalled, and a major reason behind that was that he didn't have materials to practice his technique. Now, this problem was easily solved.

Now he could finally spend some time to make some high-level medicinal inscriptions, and enhance the Heaven Opening Pills, and even the Shattered Demon Heart Crystals' medicinal efficacy.

Chapter 352 – Seclusion

“I want these inscription materials, I’ll trade you five Heaven Opening Pills for them. I can’t pay you now, but I’ll be sure to pay you back within the next two years.” Lin Ming said to Zhou Xinyu as he pointed at the massive pile of materials in the room.

Five Heaven Opening Pills was far from covering the entire price of the room of rare and precious materials. Not only that, but Lin Ming was only making a future promise for what he would owe. Of course, they had already stated beforehand that besides true essence stones, treasures, and cultivation method manual jade slips, all else would be divided between them. Although these materials were precious, they weren’t very useful to Zhou Xinyu in comparison to Heaven Opening Pills. Lin Ming also added on, “And I won’t take anything else.”

Zhou Xinyu agreed as before. After entering the treasure storehouse, almost everything had been divided according to Lin Ming’s thoughts; she didn’t oppose his suggestions at all.

Lin Ming also said, “I’ll be going into seclusion here for three months. Afterwards, I’ll be leaving for Divine Phoenix Island. Would you like to travel together with me?”

Mu Qianyu had given Lin Ming three months before he had to return to Divine Phoenix Island and enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. He would be idling around for these three months, so cultivating here was perfect. Not only that, but there were also some essence gathering arrays in this treasure storehouse, and the heaven and earth origin energy here wasn’t any worse than at the

Seven Profound Valleys. The one who constructed this treasure storehouse probably had similar plans of what to do here. In this treasure storehouse, they could seek safety in asylum and also cultivate.

Lin Ming opened a door and found that there was a decent-sized underground lake within. In the lake there were also some plump white fish. This confirmed his guess, there was even a connected food source here.

Zhou Xinyu had nowhere to go, so she prepared to go into seclusion as Lin Ming would. Afterwards, she would go to Divine Phoenix Island with Lin Ming. That place was the holy land of cultivation for Zhou Xinyu. Zhou Xinyu dreamed of breaking through to the Revolving Core realm, and this would be impossible without the support of a large sect.

Like this, the boring and tedious days of cultivation began.

Lin Ming had a great number of things he needed to accomplish in this period, a timeline of three months was already very tight.

Lin Ming and Zhou Xinyu each took two separate side compartments of the room. There was an invisible line drawn between the rooms. With this midline as the separating point, they wouldn't try to enter into each other's territories; this was a request that Lin Ming had made.

After Zhou Xinyu heard this, her faced turned red and white with anger. In the situation of men and women sharing a room, the one

most nervous would usually be the woman, because their strength was often far inferior to the man. Although Zhou Xinyu had a multitude of discontented thoughts about Lin Ming, she felt that his character was upright and trustworthy.

However, she didn't think that Lin Ming would be the one to make this request. It was as if he were afraid that she was a cougar that would take advantage of him; how could she not be mad?

Lin Ming didn't think that he would anger Zhou Xinyu in this way. The truth was that he only wanted to hide the secret of medicinal inscriptions from Zhou Xinyu. Not only that, but his cultivation process was a bit horrifying. If it was known by Zhou Xinyu that he would be eating Heaven Opening Pills like candy, her chin would probably fall to the ground.

At the start of Lin Ming's secluded cultivation, he spent most of the time practicing inscription. Only after most of his soul force had been consumed would he meditate and then refine out the impurities and pill toxins from his body.

Back when Lin Ming was poor, he wasn't even willing to use inscription materials for practice. Instead, he used his true essence to simulate the process, drawing the same symbols tens of thousands of times.

Now however, he had a massive amount of top quality materials that he could use with impunity, and he also had the support of his powerful soul force. Once his true essence was exhausted, he could just use a medium-grade true essence stone to restore it. He was able to trade low-grade true essence stones to Zhou Xinyu for

medium-grade true essence stones.

Peng!

A mass of gorgeous lights lit up the entire dark stone chamber, just like a pile of beautiful fireworks. However, the value of this beautiful display was several hundreds of true essence stones in materials. Even just one stalk of 500 year old Nepenthe Grass was worth 100 true essence stones. In an instant, 100,000 gold had turned into nothing but ashes.

Such a failure would happen many times in a single day.

Every day three or four medium-grade true essence stones would turn white and explode into dust. By using this prodigal money-wasting method, and also with the memories of the Supreme Elder from the Realm of the Gods, Lin Ming's inscription technique increased by leaps and bounds.

Sometimes Lin Min would look at the inscription technique jade slips in the stone chamber. Although these jade slips were second-rate in comparison to the inscription techniques from the Realm of the Gods, these jade slips were still able to provide Lin Ming with some inspiration. After all, the inscription materials of the Realm of the Gods were very different from the inscription materials of Sky Spill Continent.

Every day, when Lin Ming's soul force was depleted, he would resist the urge to sleep and instead begin to meditate, refining the impurities from his true essence. After several hours, Lin Ming

would always feel very hungry, and he would catch some plump white fish from the underground lake and roast them over a fire. He would give some to Zhou Xinyu, and this was one of the few times when the two would exchange words.

Each time she ate a fish, Zhou Xinyu would maintain a completely calm surface demeanor. However, her innermost feelings were constantly in amazement at Lin Ming's cooking technique. Especially when she had seen Lin Ming take out a small knife from his spatial ring and slice out all of the fish bones in just a few dozen strokes. Even the small bones and pieces were cut out, leaving only gorgeous cuts on the tender fish flesh. This caused Zhou Xinyu to feel greatly surprised. This sort of cooking craft was completely irrelevant and separate from cultivation. Without a long time of practice, it was impossible to do this.

This fish bones were placed into a pot and made into fish bone soup. This strange white fish that didn't have even eyes was originally a bony fish. Once the fish bones were boiled for about an hour, a delicious and mellow fragrance would drift out.

The only drawback in this situation was that Lin Ming didn't cook enough. Sometimes he would stay in seclusion for four or five days, completely immersed in his practice.

During this time, Zhou Xinyu could only try to catch fish herself and roast them according to Lin Ming's method and make soup. However, after killing several fish Zhou Xinyu was only just able to do so. But even so, she wasn't able to achieve the same grilling effect, and the taste was miles apart. Also, it was impossible for her to slice out the fish bones with a knife like Lin Ming did.

Like this, an entire month passed. 100 medium-grade true essence stones were turned to white dust. These medium-grade true essence stones were traded from Zhou Xinyu according to market price. 100 medium-grade true essence stones had cost Lin Ming 10,000 low-grade true essence stones.

In addition to the massive amount of materials that were ruined, the losses were already in the tens of thousands of true essence stones.

Today, Lin Ming's eyes were bloodshot. He clenched his teeth as he crushed a yellow symbol paper and a fire lit in the dark room just like a beacon of light. The flame wrapped around the Heaven Opening Pill, and within a few blinks of the eye it turned into a beautiful flame brand that marked itself atop the sparkling jade-green pill. After the fleeting radiance, the room became as dark as it was before.

“It's finally complete!”

Lin Ming gasped for breath. This medicinal inscription symbol would be able to increase the effects of the Heaven Opening Pill by around 50%.

An increase of 50% medicinal efficacy seemed like just a bit, but the truth was the effect was much more. In general, pills had a limit to their medicinal efficacy according to their grade. Once this limit was surpassed, it would be useless to eat any more.

The inscription symbol was able to increase the medicinal efficacy by 50%. This was equal to increasing the grade of the Heaven Opening Pill by a great amount, and also increasing its value by several times. In an environment where Heaven Opening Pills were extremely scarce, if this matter were made known to a large sect, it would be an extraordinary matter.

Lin Ming didn't dare to randomly swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystals. However, he wasn't this cautious about the Heaven Opening Pills. Lin Ming sat in meditation, restoring some of his strength, and then directly popped the Heaven Opening Pill into his mouth.

A moment later, the Heaven Opening Pill turned into a flow of heat that sank into his body and scattered in all directions. As it mixed into all of his meridians, he felt a familiar tingling feeling. But, after Lin Ming had suffered the ungodly torture of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, pain of this degree was just nothing to him.

Normally when a martial artist took the Heaven Opening Pill, they would feel the burning hot origin energy flowing through their meridians and skin before dissipating from their pores. This was also the same feeling when Lin Ming had taken the Heaven Opening Pill last time.

But this time, the origin energy was contained inside by an invisible strength from the medicinal inscription symbol, forcibly caged within Lin Ming's body.

The hot origin energy repeatedly rushed against this invisible

energy, but it wasn't able to overcome it. This only made the origin energy even more violent, rushing left and right within Lin Ming's meridians. The medicinal efficacy had become extremely brutal at this point.

If a normal martial artist encountered this situation, it would be a curse and not a blessing. In fact, they would not even be able to persist through such a savage attack. But Lin Ming had already fought many of these battles before, and even the Heaven Opening Pill with 50% increased strength was only able to cause his eyebrows to tighten and his palms to sweat. It wasn't too much suffering; it was only like he drank a bowl of scalding hot water.

After a quarter of an hour of time, the crazy flow of heat succumbed to Lin Ming's strength, allowing him to control it. Now, the process of Tempering Marrow could truly begin.

After the increase in power from the medicinal inscription symbol, the effects of the Heaven Opening Pill were much better. Lin Ming used this Heaven Opening Pill to temper his left arm.

This time, Lin Ming didn't even absorb the tiniest bit of origin energy to enhance his cultivation. There were still many pill toxins in his body. If he hastily increased his cultivation like this, it would only harm him.

After several days of meditation, his marrow had completely absorbed the medicinal efficacy. Now, Lin Ming began to immediately draw the second medicinal inscription symbol.

After he inscribed the second Heaven Opening Pill, he then swallowed it down.

This similar stinging sensation came back, but much lighter than it was before. Lin Ming used a continuous quarter of an hour before he finally controlled the medicinal efficacy and began to temper his right foot.

After two days, the second Heaven Opening Pill was finally absorbed; this was much faster than the first time.

This process continued for a month. Lin Ming kept taking Heaven Opening Pills that were enhanced by the medicinal inscription symbol again and again. Finally, he began to use part of the Heaven Opening Pill to wash his marrows and muscles, removing some of the gray impurities from his body. But, because he had eaten too many Heaven Opening Pills, the impurities in Lin Ming's body had reached a point where they couldn't be removed anymore.

As the energy within Lin Ming's body constantly accumulated, the effects of the Heaven Opening Pill continuously weakened. This was an unavoidable reality.

Lin Ming originally guessed that he would need around one or two thousand Heaven Opening Pills to complete Tempering Marrow. But the truth was that the only Heaven Opening Pills that would play any role were the first 100-200 Heaven Opening Pills. After 30-40% of Tempering Marrow was complete, Heaven Opening Pills would be useless.

At the end of the month, Lin Ming only needed an hour of time to fully absorb the medicinal efficacy of the Heaven Opening Pill. From this, one could see just how fast the medicinal efficacy had dropped.

From the 18 Heaven Opening Pills that he had obtained from the treasure storehouse along with the two he had obtained earlier, Lin Ming had collected a total of 20 Heaven Opening Pills. However, after eating all of these, Lin Ming had only completed 10% of Tempering Marrow. With the part of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal that he had swallowed before, Lin Ming's Tempering Marrow had reached around 20% completion.

But at this time, the residual medicinal efficacy in Lin Ming's body had already reached the limit.

Chapter 353 – Divine Phoenix Island

The remaining medicinal efficacy of the Heaven Opening Pill was naturally an incomparably valuable resource; Lin Ming used this leftover medicinal efficacy to cultivate the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’ and the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’.

With the medicinal efficacy circulating in his meridians, Lin Ming wholly immersed himself in cultivation. Without knowing night or day, several days passed, and the built up medicinal efficacy in Lin Ming’s meridians gradually began to melt away like a fine spring stream. At this moment, Lin Ming held a thin cracking sound.

With this thin cracking sound, the true essence broke through the barriers of the meridians and flowed through the body, even reaching the tiniest blood vessels on the edges.

“I’ve finally broken through to the fourth layer of the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’!” Lin Ming let out a loose breath, the air forming a vaporous white arrow that shot forth dozens of feet, smashing against the rock walls and causing them to shake.

After so many days of continuous cultivation and repeatedly exhausting his true essence, the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’ had finally made another breakthrough.

The ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’ was the true essence revolution law formula that was contained within the ‘Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians’, and was also the foundation of the ‘Chaotic

Virtues Combat Meridians’. Later, no matter how great his Tempering Marrow was or how progressed he was in the Eight Inner Hidden Gates, he still couldn’t abandon this foundation.

Not only that, but as Lin Min broke through further layers of the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’ and obtained a deeper understanding, he could better record it onto a jade slip and assist Qin Xingxuan in easing her cultivation path even more.

Finally, a full three months passed. Lin Ming had swallowed all of the Heaven Opening Pills he possessed and also reached the fourth layer of the ‘True Primal Chaos Formula’. Tempering Marrow had reached nearly 20% completion.

Although Lin Ming’s cultivation was still in the late Pulse Condensation period, his true strength had increased by a great amount.

With this feeling like his body was bursting with strength, Lin Ming was looking forwards to finding a Houtian genius and challenging him to a spectacular duel.

“The three month period is up. It’s about time I go to Divine Phoenix Island...” Lin Ming’s eyes flashed with a purple thunder; he was filled with anticipation towards the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.

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In the legends of the ancient times, when Sky Spill Continent was first formed, there were four Saint Beasts that lived in the four cardinal directions: the foreign east Azure Dragon, the northern waste Black Turtle, the western domain White Tiger, and the southern mountain Vermillion Bird. Afterwards, the heavens and earth changed, and the seas rose while the southern mountains vanished into the waters. The Vermillion Bird was reborn through nirvana in the South Sea, turning the surrounding 10,000 miles into Divine Phoenix Island. Looking down from the Primal Chaos Heavens, Divine Phoenix Island looked like a phoenix that was spreading its wings out to fly; it really caused one to wonder at the infinite mysteries of nature.

The truth of history had already disappeared into the vast ocean of time. Even the ancient history books or carvings were unable to endure the passage of tens of thousands of years. The truth had long become unknown.

Lin Ming flew several thousands of feet in the air, above the endless cloudy sea, overlooking the 10,000 mile island below.

Within Divine Phoenix Island, there were also six smaller islands that surrounded it, immersed in a thick mist as they revolved around Divine Phoenix Island.

Around these islands there were also smaller islands. They were scattered all over the vast sea like stars in the sky. Lin Ming could faintly make out that these small islands that surrounded Divine Phoenix Island were part of a titanic guardian array formation!

It was impossible to use true essence stones as the basis of an

array formation of such a terrifyingly massive scale. A sect, no matter how wealthy, would not be able to withstand such a terrifying consumption of resources.

If he didn't guess wrong, then this colossal array formation used heaven and earth origin energy as its strength, drawing the origin energy from the boundless sea, forming a self-sustaining and perfect system.

To lay down such a large array formation... the resources needed could be imagined. This caused Lin Ming to sigh, he couldn't help but marvel at the terrifying heritage of Divine Phoenix Island.

No wonder the South Sea Demon Region didn't dare to engage in a frontal assault against Divine Phoenix Island, and had to use beast tides and the threat of the extermination of other sects to force Divine Phoenix Island to engage in a war on a different battleground. Otherwise, if Divine Phoenix Island had the backing of these thousands of islands along with the myriad masters of the 19 third-grade sects, the South Sea Demon Region might enter but not leave.

The Divine Phoenix Island Sect was located at the center of the main island's Divine Phoenix Mountains.

In the 10,000 miles of the main island, there were numerous martial families. Of these martial families, the greatest ones among them already had a heritage of 2000 years. Their legacies were no less inferior than that of the Moon Seizing Sect.

These could also be considered as a part of Divine Phoenix Island.

At this time, in the main hall of Divine Phoenix Mountains' highest peak, a woman in scarlet clothes sat above a jade platform. She looked to be around 30 to 40 years old, and her hair was white, like thousands of threads of snowy silk. Her hair was swept up by silver lace in a phoenix shape, incomparably elegant.

The woman's eyes were closed in deep meditation. At this moment, her eyes suddenly opened and then flashed with a strange light. She muttered, "Yu'er mentioned a youth to this old woman a few months ago and called him a rare cultivation talent. She said that this little boy's talent even surpassed her imagination, and had gone beyond even hers and Bing'er's. Although Yu'er is naturally modest, in truth, underneath that veneer she is extremely arrogant. For her to give a youth such a high appraisal... this old woman is really curious. Today, this old woman was meditating and suddenly felt a touch of the mind... it's probably that little boy that Yu'er mentioned. This old woman really wants to have a look and see just how strong he is. If he can't even compare to the core disciples of my Divine Phoenix Island, then this old woman will truly be disappointed."

As the woman spoke to herself, she flicked her fingers and a flame flashed in the air. She didn't need to use a sound transmitting talisman to pass on a message.

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The immortal mountains were layered in clouds, thick, billowing veils of mist winding around the 1000 peaks. From afar, it looked

just curtains of the lightest white gauze were draped over the entire mountain range, hiding it from view.

In midair, an ethereal jade palace appeared silently like a mirage among the clouds. This immortal pavilion was without a doubt, the location of the Divine Phoenix Island Sect!

They hadn't even closed in, but they could see all sorts of spirit boats and flying mounts shuttling back and forth in the air. Even the Winged Flood Dragon that Lin Ming sat on didn't attract too much attention.

"It is truly worthy of being called a top fourth-grade sect, the aura is truly extraordinary." Standing behind Lin Ming, Zhou Xinyu felt a deep emotion springing from within her. Compared to Divine Phoenix Island, the Moon Seizing Sect was nothing more than a small town, not worth mentioning at all.

Lin Ming didn't speak. His eyes were focused on a spirit boat that was flying towards him, as he waited for the other to come up and question him.

"Who goes there?" A man in a red robe stood on the prow of the spirit boat, sweeping his eyes over Lin Ming, his vision full of arrogance and pride.

This arrogance was deliberately revealed, but had already been etched within his bones from the time of his birth. This was an arrogance and pride that stemmed from being a disciple of a top sect within the South Horizon Region.

“I am Lin Ming, Seven Profound Valleys’ disciple.” Lin Ming cupped his hands together, neither arrogant nor humble.

“Lin Ming?” The red-robed man looked up Lin Ming once more, “You’re the heaven-step talent that Uncle Master Mu mentioned?”

“If you’re speaking about the heaven-step talent under the joint talent training program, then that’s me.”

The red-robed man had a peculiar look in his eyes as he glanced at Lin Ming once more. He turned around, saying, “Follow me!”

As he spoke, he turned the spirit boat around and directed it to fly straight towards Divine Phoenix Island.

Zhou Xinyu said with a bit of dissatisfaction, “This fellow really looks down on everyone else.”

“It’s normal.” Lin Ming calmly said. The difference in strength between Divine Phoenix Island and the Seven Profound Valleys was greater than the difference between the Seven Profound Valleys and Sky Fortune Kingdom. He only had to think back to the attitude that the Seven Profound Valleys’ disciples held towards the Sky Fortune Kingdom disciples to understand the reason for this red-robed man’s haughty attitude. Even the residents of a large city would look down on humble country folk with contempt in their hearts.

They rode the Winged Flood Dragon to the entrance along with the red-robed man. At this time, the red-robed man was already waiting at the stone steps in front.

“From here you have to walk, you cannot fly. These are the rules of Divine Phoenix Island.” The man pointed at Zhou Xinyu, “Who is this girl?”

Zhou Xinyu seemed unhappy to have a finger pointed at her in such a manner. She walked up and unhappily said, “I am Lan Yi. I came to Divine Phoenix Island to formally enter as a disciple.”

“Enter as a disciple?” The red-robed man traced his chin, comparing Zhou Xinyu’s cultivation to her age. He said, “Three months from now, Divine Phoenix Island will recruit outer court disciples. With your talent, you should barely be able to qualify. Before this, you cannot enter through the gate.”

“You...”

“A war will soon break out at any moment. No unauthorized personnel may enter the mountain.” The red-robed man icily said. As he was speaking, two spirit boats flew over them, directly flying towards the main hall.

Zhou Xinyu looked up at the spirit boats and coldly snorted, “Didn’t you just say that from here we have to walk to the entrance? Then what about those spirit boats?”

The red-robed man frowned, “Do you think I lied to you about sect regulations to lead you on or play with you? Those two spirit boats have a sun symbol flying above them. That symbolizes that they are emissaries from the Five Element Region’s Sunfire Sect. It just so happens that it will soon be my Divine Phoenix Island’s Exalted Vice Island Master Tianguang’s 400th birthday. All sorts of emissaries from different sects will be arriving to celebrate. This emissary from the Sunfire Sect is either a Revolving Core elder or the sect’s direct disciple. With their status, they may ride their spirit boat to the palace square and then afterwards they will have to walk!”

Zhou Xinyu didn’t retort. Although this red-robed man was arrogant, he wasn’t deliberately making matters difficult for them. The truth was that she hadn’t received any invitation, and it wouldn’t make any sense for them to let her through the gate. In fact, other sects also managed their entrances like this.

Zhou Xinyu sighed. She turned to Lin Ming and said, “Just inform me by sound transmission later. First I’ll find someplace to stay.”

Lin Ming hadn’t yet said anything when the red-robed man’s face suddenly changed. He looked at Lin Ming strangely, and then coldly said, “I just received orders. You may both enter, but you...” The red-robed man pointed at Zhou Xinyu, “After you enter the mountain gate, you may not climb the mountain, you can only stay at the guest hall outside. As for you Lin Ming, you follow me to Parasol Tree Pavilion, and we’ll arrange a place for you to stay there.”

As the red-robed man spoke, he waved his hand and sent out a sound transmitting talisman. This was an order to the disciples of the Parasol Tree Pavilion, so that they would prepare living quarters for Lin Ming.

In the Divine Phoenix Mountains, there was a mountain peak that was covered with a forest of parasol trees. Underneath the towering trees, a young girl was sitting, a blade of grass between her lips. The red-robed man's sound transmitting talisman lit right beside her.

The young girl softly coughed.

“What's the matter, Junior-apprentice Sister?” Beside the girl, there was another red-robed man meditating.

“I just received a message from Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang. He said that the boy that Uncle Master Mu recommended has arrived, and he will also be arranged at our Parasol Tree Pavilion.”

Chapter 354 – Parasol Tree Pavilion

“Oh? He’ll be living at our Parasol Tree Pavilion?” The red-robed man’s eyebrows rose in a challenge, and then his face sank. This man was a core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island’s Vermillion Bird Faction, named Yan Fuhong, otherwise called Sir Fuhong.

In Divine Phoenix Island, the disciples were ranked in the same manner as in the Seven Profound Valleys. The direct disciples were at the top, and there were around 10 of them. As for core disciples, they were only inferior to these direct disciples. Lin Ming was evaluated as a heaven-step talent, and he would be receiving treatment equal to a core disciple.

Yan Fuhong said, “The Parasol Tree Pavilion is where the core disciples of the Vermillion Bird Faction live. Do the masters really intend on taking this fellow in as a core disciple?”

“I think that’s the meaning.” The young girl shrugged, not too happy that Lin Ming would be sticking his spoon in the pot of soup. “But since Uncle Master Mu has given him such a high evaluation, he should have talent comparable to us; it’s not wrong that he lives at Parasol Tree Pavilion. You know Uncle Master Mu’s personality – she isn’t someone who exaggerates things.”

As Mu Qianyu was mentioned, Yan Fuhong’s complexion was even uglier. He was naturally aware of her Saintess’ evaluation of Lin Ming. It was said that when the Seven Profound Valleys held their Total Faction Martial Meeting, her highness the Saintess had sent Uncle Master Qinghong especially to observe the competition. It was only a small third-grade sect’s Martial Meeting, and yet

Uncle Master Qinghong was set out. Afterwards, the Saintess had even personally gone to the Seven Profound Valleys and stayed there a full two months.

This caused Yan Fuhong to feel uncomfortable. Mu Qianyu was an extremely high and transcendent existence within Divine Phoenix Island. Whoever she thought highly of, that person would rise to fame. “In less than half a year, the Parasol Tree Pavilion has gained another core disciple. After the 10 direct disciple spots are taken from the quota, there are only six more spots for those who can enter the central main hall of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. Now there’s some fellow that popped out from nowhere who wants to steal our food! You should know that those people who can only enter the ordinary places of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm are incomparable to those who can enter the central main hall!”

The girl in red glanced at Yan Fuhong and said, “There are only six spots, you think he can obtain one?”

“To enter the core hall doesn’t look at strength, only at one’s total comprehensive evaluation. And that evaluation score is decided by the elders. Don’t forget, Uncle Master Mu’s voice has great sway among the others.

As the girl in red listened to Yan Fuhong’s words, she hung her head, thoughtful, “Then, what do you want to do?”

Yan Fuhong hesitated for a moment and then asked, “I heard that he was 16 years old?”

“Mm.”

“16 years old... no matter how talented he is, his cultivation shouldn't surpass the peak Pulse Condensation period. At most he should be at the mid or late Pulse Condensation period. Even if he is talented, he should be naïve and his strength minimal. Since it's the Exalted Vice Island Master Tianguang's 400th year celebratory feast, then as long as we see an opportunity...” As Yan Fuhong spoke, he tore out a pile of parasol tree leaves, his hands clenching as a fire flashed in his hands, burning the leaves to ashes.

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Divine Phoenix Island's main hall was a sprawling area that was covered by many buildings across dozens of mountain peaks. Lin Ming followed the red-robed Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang for over a half-hour walk before they reached a mountain range that was covered entirely by parasol trees. The trees were long and straight, reaching to the sky. Any one of these trees had a history of hundreds of years.

As Lin Ming walked through the parasol tree forest with Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang, he saw many youthful elites and heroes along the way, all of them around the age of 20 or so. Most of these youths all wore one of two types of clothing. The Vermillion Bird Faction disciples wore red robes with a Vermillion Bird and parasol tree image embroidered on their chest, and the Blue Luan Faction disciples wore blue clothing with a Blue Luan and jade bamboo embroidered on their chest.

Among these young heroes and elites, Lin Ming also saw youths that wore seven other different kinds of patterns. These clothing styles were obviously not from Divine Phoenix Province's 19 third-grade sects.

Lin Ming couldn't help but ask, "What sect do these people come from?"

Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang responded, "Since it's almost Exalted Tianguang's 400th birthday celebration, there are a total of eight other sects coming to celebrate. Among them is the South Horizon Region's Supreme Mystery Temple and Dire Space Sect, but also those from the Five Element Region. For instance, the Sunfire Sect, Thundercrest Sect, Deep Earth Sect, Arctic Ice Palace, and so on."

"Five Element Region?" Lin Ming's curiosity was piqued. This was the first time that he had heard of matters outside of the South Horizon Region. Indeed, when one was stronger they would also have a broader view of the world. Before now, his view of the horizon had been limited to the Divine Phoenix Province only.

"Mm. The Five Element Region is a land west of the South Horizon Region, and their area is also larger than the South Horizon Region. The heaven and earth origin energy of the Five Element Region is different from the South Horizon Region, and the elements of metal, wood, water, fire, earth, wind, and thunder are all split up. Therefore, over 90% of the martial artists in the Five Element Region have a true essence attribute, and that's why there are also single attribute sects that arise such as the Sunfire Sect, Deep Earth Sect, and Thundercrest Sect."

“That’s possible? The heaven and earth origin energy of two lands next to each other can be different?” Lin Ming was stunned; he didn’t think that the Five Element Region would be so spectacular.

Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang had already expected that Lin Ming would be ignorant about these things. He smoothly explained, “The ‘territories’ of Sky Spill Continent aren’t divided randomly. There are large differences between every region. For the heaven and earth origin energy to be different between these lands isn’t unusual at all. Even the heaven and earth origin energy above the Primal Chaos Heavens is different. In the Five Element Region, because the people there have been studying single-attribute cultivation methods and styles for countless generations, it could be said that their individual attribute arts have reached the pinnacle. For instance, the Sunfire Sect and Arctic Ice Palace think that their techniques of controlling fire and ice are superior to my Divine Phoenix Island. Since it is Exalted Tianguang’s celebratory birthday banquet, how could they miss such an opportunity to show off? They definitely must take this chance to compare their skills with my Divine Phoenix Island.

“Oh? Comparing cultivation methods at a birthday banquet?” Lin Ming was a bit surprised by this.

“It’s always been like this. Between the large sects, all they care about is face. As long as it’s some grand event like a the marriage or century birthday of a high-level character, then great powers will always gather together. At that time, there will always be a contest where they will compare skills and have a little bit of fun. In truth, this is just a display to see whose disciples are the most

outstanding and who legacies are stronger. To the old cronies of the sect who want to know that their legacies are the best, their face is more valuable than their life.”

Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang was speaking with a friendly air as if he was proudly being a good teacher. To someone like Lin Ming who was ignorant of what happened in large sects, this was a satisfying chance to show off his psychological knowhow.

Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang seemed to be addicted to this feeling. He non-stop introduced the sects and their most excellent disciples to Lin Ming.

“The Five Element Region has a total of seven fourth-grade sects. Because of the characteristics of the heaven earth origin energy in their land, there is a fourth-grade sect that’s formed over each gathered elemental origin energy. As for the South Horizon region, we have a total of three fourth-grade sects and one fifth-grade sect. Although this sounds like less, we wouldn’t lose to them in terms of combat strength. For instance, our Divine Phoenix Island has the power to go against two fourth-grade sects!”

As Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang said this with a completely self-satisfied expression, Lin Ming was utterly speechless. Divine Phoenix Island was a top fourth-grade sect, so it wasn’t wrong that they could go against two other fourth-grade sects, but the so-called fifth-grade sect was obviously the South Sea Demon Region.

Could the South Sea Demon Region really be called a sect of the South Horizon Region!? If the South Horizon Region really fought with the Five Element Region, it would already be great if the

South Sea Demon Region didn't stab them in the back first.

“Do you see that girl in front? It doesn't look quite obvious but she has a very fiery temper and is prone to fits. Be careful around her unless you want to bring disaster upon yourself.” Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang lowered his voice and then simply changed to true essence sound transmission. “She's called Huo Ruyan, and is also known as the Sunfire Princess. She's one of the top direct disciples of the Sunfire Sect, and her strength among the young heroic elites is listed in the second rank! Her technique at controlling fire is superb; not even our Vermillion Bird Faction's Elder Senior-apprentice Brother could necessarily compare with her.”

Lin Ming followed as Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang said this, and casually glanced over at the parasol trees, seeing a young, confident looking girl wearing a crimson colored flexible armor. By her side was a young maid, and the two were chatting as they walked.

As they saw Lin Ming and Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang, the girls casually glanced at them and then no longer paid attention.

She really did have the qualifications to ignore them. Her cultivation was already at the early Houtian period, and Lin Ming was just at the late Pulse Condensation period. As for Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang, he was only at the peak Pulse Condensation period.

“How old is this Sunfire Princess?” Lin Ming was a bit interested. He could sense a very rich and pure fire origin energy emitting

from this girl's body. This sort of feeling absolutely came from a Flame Essence. Not only that, but it wasn't a low-level Flame Essence.

“Should be around 18 or 19 years old. This Sunfire princess intends to put on a great show during this banquet.” Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang sourly said. In front of the famed Sunfire Princess, he naturally didn't have any pride.

Lin Ming nodded, an 18-19 year old Houtian master was truly extraordinary.

“The Five Element Region's seven sects have terrifying attainments in single-attribute cultivation methods. There is also someone at the Thundercrest Sect who is comparable to the Sunfire Princess. Their name is Zhou Lie, and this person is also called ‘the Thunderclap’, and was said to have absorbed a high-grade human-step Thunder Soul! This heroic elite is also listed as a second rank!”

“Arctic Ice Palace's Bai Aoxuan is called the ‘Northern Snowy Sword’. His strength is also at the second rank!”

“There is Deep Earth Sect's Shi Yun, his bodily defensive power is terrifying; his strength is at the third rank!”

“That is Gold Bell Mountain's Liu Yue; his strength is third rank...”

Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang's mouth was like a blossoming lotus as he spouted on and on, introducing over 20 people in a single endless breath. Lin Ming suddenly asked, puzzled, "There are second rank and third rank talents, but what about first rank?"

"First rank? Hehe..." Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang disdainfully laughed. "They wish. Well, the first rank talents are called 'Saints'. In my current generation of Divine Phoenix Island, there isn't any young heroic elite that is ranked as a 'Saint' talent. But, ten years ago, there were actually two..."

"Oh? Who were they?" Lin Ming asked, unthinking.

Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang looked at Lin Ming like he was an idiot. He patiently said, "They are Her Highness Mu Qianyu and Her Highness Mu Bingyun. They are twin sisters, didn't you know?"

Lin Ming almost choked on himself, then silently traced his chin in embarrassment. He should have known this, it was just that he had always subconsciously regarded Mu Qianyu as a top character senior, and had ignored her age.

Mu Qianyu was only a young 27 years old. Ten years ago, she would have been around his age, and would have been a junior of her generation.

However, thinking of Mu Qianyu's monstrous talent, he could imagine just how terrifying a 'Saint' level talent truly was. No wonder the seven fourth-grade sects of the Five Element Region

couldn't easily produce a Saint level talent.

As Lin Ming and Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang were speaking, there were others talking about him. Deep within the forest of parasol trees, there was a blue-clothed man with clouds embroidered on his chest eating some pine nuts as he asked Yan Fuhong, "Brother Yan, that's the fellow from your Divine Phoenix Island that is regarded so highly by Fairy Maiden Mu?"

Chapter 355 – Entering the Sect

The youth who spoke was named Zhan Yunjian, and he was a disciple from Storm Valley. He was 19 years old, and his cultivation had just reached the top of the early Houtian realm, just a step away from reaching the middle Houtian realm.

This youth and Yan Fuhong were old acquaintances. After they had ‘accidentally met’, Yan Fuhong had struck up a conversation, and during it, he had mentioned Mu Qianyu’s high evaluation of Lin Ming. He wanted to stir up Zhan Yunjian’s arrogance, and have him ruin Lin Ming’s prestige at the birthday banquet.

To teach Lin Ming a lesson was a matter that was only suited to outer court disciples. The so-called competitions that happened at the banquet would be an extremely casual affair. Whoever wanted to compete with whoever would only have to call a name or jump up onstage to declare a duel. Sometimes they might not even compare just martial arts fighting skills. They might compare fire skills, secret techniques, martial skills, Concept comprehensions, and so forth.

In short, there were many ways to show off one’s skills. And these competitions usually had an unspoken rule that disciples of the same sect couldn’t challenge each other. Since Yan Fuhong and Lin Ming were from the same sect, it was naturally an inappropriate affair.

As Zhan Yunjian heard Yan Fuhong speak of Lin Ming, someone who was highly thought of by the Saint rank talent Mu Qianyu, he began to pay attention to Lin Ming’s cultivation.

“Mm? He’s only at the late Pulse Condensation period; it’s hard to believe that someone of that cultivation is thought of so highly by Fairy Maiden Mu. How old is he?”

“16 years old.”

“Really now? A 16 year old with a late Pulse Condensation cultivation is about satisfactory. If his strength is also outstanding, then he deserves to be thought of highly by Fairy Maiden Mu.” Zhang Yunjian casually evaluated Lin Ming with a few words then began to walk away.

Yan Fuhong anxiously said, “Brother Yun, aren’t you interested in him?”

“Interested?” Zhan Yunjian’s footsteps paused, and he faintly smiled at Yan Fuhong, his hand still peeling pine nuts. “It looks like you have some problems with this Lin Ming kid. I am interested, but I also don’t have the qualifications to move against him. He’s three years younger than me, and his cultivation is also lower by a great deal. How could I possibly compare anything with him like this? If he were three years older, then I might be interested in having a little match with him.”

Zhan Yunjian was a character who was ranked among the top disciples of Storm Valley, and was equal to the Sunfire Sect’s Sunfire Princess, or the Thundercrest Sect’s Thunderclap. He was someone who liked to challenge those at higher levels, especially those that were older or had a higher cultivation. But, Lin Ming

was only a young little 16 year old boy, and his cultivation was also only at the late Pulse Condensation period. At the banquet, he would almost be the same as a little child. If Zhan Yunjian challenged Lin Ming, even if he didn't fight Lin Ming, he would be laughed to death by others.

If he really fought with Lin Ming, it would still be a useless endeavor. There was no glory in winning, nor would it be fantastic. Zhan Yunjian didn't want to participate in such a thankless and unflattering event.

Yan Fuhong wasn't willing to let this go. He tried to urge further and said, "Brother Yun shouldn't look down on him. Even though his cultivation isn't high, he's quite strong, otherwise there's no way he would have entered the discerning eye of the Saintess. He's only 16 this year, and he defeated many aspiring heroes and elites to win first place at the Seven Profound Valleys' Total Faction Martial Meeting..."

"Seven Profound Valleys? Is that a third-grade sect in your Divine Phoenix Province? Haha, Brother Fuhong, there's no need to even mention this matter. A third-grade sect's Total Faction Martial Meeting champion simply doesn't count for anything. When I was 15 years old I challenged the chief disciple of a third-grade sect under Storm Valley and defeated him in less than 10 moves."

Zhan Yunjian casually said this, obviously not placing much importance on this memory. He saw Yan Fuhong's hesitant appearance and said, "Well, Brother Fuhong, it seems that you are also forced. It seems this little fellow will be divvying up a great

part of your resources. So be it then. I'll ask a few of my younger junior-apprentice brothers to go up and frustrate him a bit. What is he best at?"

The banquet matches were not for the purpose of defeating one's opponent, but for showing off one's skills. Zhan Yunjian asked what Lin Ming was most skilled at because he wanted to suppress him in whatever he excelled at. This would be the most rewarding method of punishing Lin Ming.

Yan Fuhong was instantly happy. He said, "That boy is best at controlling thunder!"

"Controlling thunder? That's the domain of the Thundercrest Sect. I just happen to know a young junior-apprentice sister from the Thundercrest Sect who is around 17 years old. For her to compare a bit with him sounds about right."

"17 years old?" Yan Fuhong frowned. Although he didn't think that Lin Ming was too strong, he didn't doubt Lin Ming's talent. How could his talent be poor if he was someone that Mu Qianyu valued? "She's young. Do you have confidence she'll win?"

"Haha, don't underestimate her. In another one or two years, she'll be able to enter the second rank."

In the absence of a monstrous talent like a Saint rank character, the second rank would be the top; there weren't too many of these talents in a sect. This let Yan Fuhong feel at ease. This young girl was also a year older than Lin Ming.

“Many thanks Brother Yun. Today’s my treat. Let’s go to Over Mountain Hall!”

“Over Mountain Hall? That’s a good place! I heard that it takes a medium-grade true essence stone to eat there, and a meal there is the same as a common martial artist’s hard earned cultivation for a whole year; how could I miss this opportunity, haha!”

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The Parasol Tree Pavilion had a total of 360 buildings, and most of these buildings were empty. The Vermillion Bird Faction only had a mere 20 core disciples, so most of the buildings were empty spares used for other events. For instance, for the exalted Tianguang Revered Master’s 400th birthday banquet, the young heroes and elites would be staying at the Parasol Tree Pavilion.

Lin Ming lived in the 22nd building. The one who lived across from him was the red-robed youth who had led him through the mountain gate, Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang. These days, Lin Ming had become much more familiar with him, and even knew his name – Zhang Zhen.

The small building he was supplied had its own courtyard. For cultivation, Lin Ming would practice in the early morning when the eastern sun first rose, and the courtyard would fill with heaven and earth origin energy. The origin energy of Divine Phoenix Island was much richer than the Seven Profound Valleys’, and cultivating here was like soaking in a sea of heaven and earth

origin energy; it was an incomparably pleasant and luxurious feeling.

Parasol Tree Pavilion had been very noisy and bustling with activity these days. There had been too many disciples that had come in, and many of them had unique skills and were itching to do something. Unable to wait for the banquet to start, they had already gone to the open areas of the parasol tree forest to compete with each other in a test of skills. When these individuals began to compare skills, it would often attract a great deal of onlookers.

Lin Ming stayed in his small building for three days, and nobody bothered paying attention to him. The people of Divine Phoenix Island were extremely busy preparing for the smelting trials of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, and also the birthday banquet of Tianguang Revered Master.

In the afternoon of the fourth day, a young maid spoke at Lin Ming's door. "Sir Lin, Her Highness the Saintess requests your presence at the Back Palace."

The maids of Divine Phoenix Island were similar to the janitor disciples of the Seven Profound Valleys. If they served the Saintess or other elders, their rank might become a little higher. Although this young maid was around Lin Ming's age, she had a Bone Forging stage cultivation.

"Then I'll have to bother Miss to guide me there." Lin Ming respectfully said.

The little maid shyly giggled and led Lin Ming to the Back Palace of the Parasol Tree Pavilion. This was not the mountain gate or the palace entrance, so one could fly here.

The peaks of Divine Phoenix Island stretched without end, and there were a variety of peaks that showcased the splendors of the land, even dangerous peaks that seemed sculpted from the greenest jade. Divine Phoenix Mountains' Back Palace was located at the summit of an extremely high and wondrous mountain that was blanketed by endless green parasol trees. A dense fog wound around the entire mountain, forming a haze green illusion.

The Back Palace was hundreds of feet high, and covered several miles of land, the entire structure made of exquisite blue stone. As Lin Ming walked in, he saw a woman in a red robe sitting in a high chair made of the purest green jade. Although the woman had silver hair, she didn't seem old, and still seemed to be in the glorious and magnificent prime of her life. At the woman's right sat another elegant woman. This woman was Mu Qianyu.

Without a doubt, that silver-haired woman was a master of a generation. Lin Ming respectfully bowed and said, "Junior Lin Ming greets Senior."

"Lin Ming, this old woman has heard of Yu'er mentioning you."

The beautiful woman kindly smiled, her eyes containing a lingering charm that befuddled the eyes as she glanced over Lin Ming. "The truth is that since you are part of the joint talent training program, you could cultivate here at Divine Phoenix Island even if you don't join my sect, and also enjoy the treatment

of a core disciple. But, I heard from Yu'er that she has already passed on the first layer of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' cultivation method to you, and that you also intend to further study this cultivation method. However, this cultivation method is a strict legacy of my Divine Phoenix Island that cannot be passed to outsiders. Thus, this old woman would like to ask you: do you want to join my Divine Phoenix Island as a core disciple?"

Lin Ming's voice caught in his throat, he didn't immediately respond.

The beautiful woman smiled and said, "I see that you are a man of honor, and that you're also reluctant because of the Seven Profound Valleys. Haha, a true man knows graciousness and pays his debts. This old woman is already aware of the matter between you and the Seven Profound Valleys. As this old woman understands, you are not an official disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys, and the Seven Profound Valleys also hasn't put forth any effort in cultivating you. If you choose to enter Divine Phoenix Island, there won't be any problems. Also, concerning Shi Zongtian, this old woman has already discussed this matter with him, and he has agreed that after you enter Divine Phoenix Island, you may also be considered half a Seven Profound Valleys disciple.

This beautiful woman said this all casually and plainly, but the truth was that Divine Phoenix Island had made many concessions in order to appease the Seven Profound Valleys.

Lin Ming hesitated; entering into a sect was a life-changing decision that would concern his entire future. Initially, when he was at the Seven Profound Valleys, he hadn't truly entered the

sect. As he was considering, he saw that Mu Qianyu was winking at him, hinting for him to quickly agree.

“Senior, this junior has a question. What sort of duties does a Divine Phoenix Island core disciple have?”

The beautiful woman was stunned. She meaningfully looked at Lin Ming and smiled, “You want to discuss conditions with this old woman? The young are truly brave! To think of all the young heroes and elites that have stepped over each other and struggled so furiously to become a core disciple of my Divine Phoenix Island, and yet you are asking of conditions. Truly confident!”

The beautiful woman’s words seemed like praise, but they were filled with a sense of dissatisfaction. To her, Lin Ming’s words were a bit insolent.

Mu Qianyu was secretly worried on the side.

Lin Ming slowly and calmly said, “Senior, I am a man who has full faith in the commitments and promises that he makes. The ancients have a saying – a master for a day, a master for life. If I enter into a sect, then then this truth is also similar. Since this is a commitment that I will have for my entire life, naturally I must consider it twice and not easily answer. Senior mentioned that there are many young geniuses that rush over each other to enter Divine Phoenix Island, but aren’t these people coming just for Divine Phoenix Island’s resources? The world is splendid, and there are advantages to be found everywhere. In this world, there are countless people that go crazy for their personal benefit, but those that are crazy for righteousness and honor are rare. Those

that are the first to rush to become a disciple of Divine Phoenix Island, won't they also be the first rushing to escape when Divine Phoenix Island suffers a calamity? That is what I believe."

Lin Ming's words were neither haughty nor weak, and they resounded in the hall. The beautiful woman had a surprised look; she didn't think that a 16 year old boy would say such words. Even Mu Qianyu was slightly shocked.

After a period of silence, the beautiful woman suddenly smiled. "Good! Well said! Righteous and crazy! As long as your talent and abilities are to this old woman's satisfaction, then you may enter my Divine Phoenix Island without any obligation, as long as you have honor and conscience!"

Chapter 356 – The Birthday Banquet Begins

Divine Phoenix Island was extremely powerful. They did not lack in those that pretended to be humble, nor did they lack in talents. However, nobody knew just how many of these talents were truly loyal to Divine Phoenix Island.

The beautiful woman didn't fully approve of Lin Ming just because of her words. But, she could affirm in her heart that Lin Ming wasn't someone who faked appearances.

A truly ungrateful person that forgot grace and held no virtues, well, their promises were useless. As for those righteous individuals that didn't betray their mortality, there was no need to have them make any promise. Thus, the beautiful woman gave Lin Ming the greatest degree of freedom equal to a secret disciple.

“First you will apprentice under Yu’er. She will also be the one to hand down and teach you the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle. This old woman is called Yuhuang. Later, you will also call this old woman Master Ancestor Yuhuang! If you can blossom in radiance within the year or maybe if you reach the Houtian realm before 17 years of age, then I will personally teach you.”

The beautiful woman spoke her words and then left. Mu Qianyu bowed to see her off, and Lin Ming also deeply bowed like a good disciple.

In a flash, only Lin Ming and Mu Qianyu were left in the hall. The serious expression that Mu Qianyu had quickly faded, and as

she looked at Lin Ming, she couldn't help but laugh.

Lin Ming subconsciously traced his nose, sheepishly saying, "What makes Miss Mu smile?"

"What did you just call me?" Mu Qianyu winked, grinning as she sardonically looked at Li Ming.

"Ah..." Lin Ming was a bit embarrassed, "Master Mu."

"Who are you calling Master Mu? Just call me Master. I didn't think that Master would place you under me as my disciple. In fact, you are my very first disciple. Divine Phoenix Island has over 30 core disciples, and around 20 of those were from the Vermillion Bird Faction and another dozen or so from the Blue Lian Faction. All of those disciples have masters that are Revolving Core powerhouses, and I'm the only one whose cultivation is below the Revolving Core realm!" Mu Qianyu sounded a bit excited. The first time being someone else's master always gave a very unusual feeling.

Lin Ming was utterly speechless. He thought that being Mu Qianyu's disciple was an outlandish and strange turn of events. In truth, he was hoping to apprentice under an elder. For instance, that old lady Yuhuang.

It looked like the only route he had was to show off his talents as soon as possible and attract the attention of that old woman Yuhuang, so he could apprentice under her and quickly get rid of this crappy status.

Mu Qianyu noticed Lin Ming's astonished expression and that it was somewhat funny. She continued to say, "Alright, I won't mess with you. I know your status is only temporary. I'll be honest with you. You haven't yet obtained the approval of my master. Although I've already spoken of your talent to Master, seeing is better than believing. Whether it is entering the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm or my senior uncle's 400th birthday banquet, both are opportunities for you to display your talent. The sooner you can enter as a disciple of my master and become a direct disciple, the more advantageous it will be for you.

The 10 direct disciples of Divine Phoenix Island were all taught by top masters like old lady Yuhuang. Although Mu Qianyu was a monstrous genius, in terms of being someone's master, she simply didn't have the experience.

Lin Ming said, "I have to attend Tianguang Revered Master's celebratory birthday banquet?"

"Mm. Since you're a core disciple, you naturally have to participate in the birthday banquet. It is also a process for my master to approve of you. Remember, although you will be entering the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, there are also good areas and bad areas. One kind is for the ordinary group which can only enter around the periphery of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. As for the other, they may enter the main Ancient Phoenix central hall. The difference between the two is astronomical, and there is a limit of 16 individuals that may enter the main hall. 10 of those will be the direct disciples, leaving only 6 spots for the core disciples. If you can't display a great enough talent, then one of those spots won't be given to you."

“So it’s like this...” Lin Ming’s mind stirred. Naturally, he didn’t want to miss out on this Ancient Phoenix central hall.

“Now return. And don’t underestimate everyone else here. They are all talents that are much higher than anyone from the Seven Profound Valleys. Even if Jiang Baoyun was placed here, he wouldn’t be anything special.” As Mu Qianyu spoke, she flipped her hand and two red jade slips appeared in her palm.

“This is the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ jade slip. Take good care of it and definitely don’t lose it somewhere!”

Lin Ming took a deep breath and solemnly took the jade slip. This was the core cultivation of Divine Phoenix Island, its value could be imagined.

Although there was most likely a special mark on this jade slip to track its location, for Mu Qianyu to give this jade slip to him like this was already a reflection of the enormous trust she held in him.

.....

That night, the moon hung bright in the sky. Lin Ming sat in the garden of his little building, tranquilly meditating over the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’.

Of the two jade slips, one recorded the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, and the other contained insights

from when Mu Qianyu had cultivated it. Not only were they the experiences of Mu Qianyu, but also the experiences that many other seniors had left behind, all of them reorganized by Mu Qianyu and completely engraved onto the jade slips. When she had been cultivating, she had also held a jade slip in her hands. Whenever she thought of something useful, she would record it.

Those things that were recorded in the jade slip were all mostly related to the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. There were some supplementary materials, some skills, some analyses on how to make a better breakthrough, and other such experiences. This small jade slip was the accumulated wisdom of generations of wisdom.

“Good stuff!” Lin Ming couldn’t help but exclaim.

Although the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ was a top cultivation method, it was still incomplete. If one didn’t have these supplementary materials, it would be even more difficult to cultivate.

Lin Ming used a full half hour to skim through the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ and then laid down the jade slip, rubbing his forehead. The ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ was shocking; it was even more terrifying than when he had first cultivated the ‘Heretical God Force’.

According to the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, if one filled in the empty spots and restored this cultivation to the full glory of the Ancient Phoenix Clan – and also cultivate it to the highest levels with the pure bloodline of the Ancient Phoenix – one

could rebirth themselves in the fires of nirvana.

After nine nirvanas, they could reach Perfection of this cultivation, becoming immortal and indestructible.

Even the two Supreme Elders' memories that Lin Ming had inherited didn't dare to boast about any cultivation like this. The senior that left behind the Sorcerer Pagoda also lived for tens of thousands of years, but in the end was unable to escape the samsara of life and death, eventually leaving the mortal coil after failing his closed door seclusion.

However, considering the characteristics of the phoenix itself, this 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' didn't seem to be like empty talk. Of course, whether or not any of this was true couldn't be verified. To complete the entire Ancient Phoenix Clan's secret technique was simply a dream.

As Lin Ming's conscious was immersed within the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle', he also quickly entered into the ethereal martial intent state, sealing off his six senses and letting the flow of time drift past him.

The rich fire origin energy flowed into Lin Ming's body, forming a vortex of origin energy that swirled around him. This was the rich fire-attribute origin energy of the Parasol Tree Pavilion; if one practiced the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' here, they would have twice the result with half the effort.

After the origin energy entered Lin Ming's body, it was all

absorbed by the Heretical God Seed without even the least bit leaking out. It could be said that Lin Ming's body was a bottomless pit; whatever went in, wouldn't come out.

Even Mu Qianyu had been shocked by Lin Ming's talent at fire-attribute cultivation methods. She had called him the 'child of flame'.

The Heretical God Seed began to excitedly stir, and the Flame Essence that revolved around the Heretical God Seed began to howl. After some time, an invisible ring of fire rippled outwards from Lin Ming, quickly spreading. This invisible ring of fire was fast like a gust of wind, rustling all of the parasol tree leaves of the forest.

Those that lived near Lin Ming's little building were mostly Vermillion Bird Faction core disciples, and they were extremely sensitive to fire origin energy fluctuations. As they felt the fire origin energy blowing in the wind, they were surprised.

Just what was that?

Everything had happened too fast; they didn't have time to investigate just what the source of that fire origin energy was. They released their senses to detect the source, but after being unable to find anything, eventually gave up.

The fire origin energy gradually faded. Lin Ming let out a long breath and opened his eyes. He had finally reached Perfection of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' cultivation

method's first layer!

If it wasn't for too many pill toxins being left in his meridians, then reaching Perfection of this cultivation method's first layer would have already been enough to help Lin Ming break through to the peak of Pulse Condensation.

From the Pulse Condensation period to the Houtian realm and Xiantian realm, the 'Chaotic Virtues Combat Meridians' was no longer applicable to help him advance. However, this 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' seemed as if it were tailor made for his body, perfectly complementing with the Heretical God Force and allowing Lin Ming's cultivations to increase by leaps and bounds. In addition to Lin Ming's ethereal martial intent, his martial talent no longer hindered him.

Lin Ming cultivated for the entire night until early the next morning. As the day dawned, the entire Parasol Tree Pavilion was bustling with lively activity; today was Tianguang Revered Master's 400th birthday banquet.

A Revolving Core martial artist could live up to 500 to 600 years old. As they only had a few century birthdays in their life, naturally they had to make grand arrangements.

The Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang that lived across from Lin Ming knocked on his door in the morning and began to talk to him about the banquet and the rules he needed to follow. His superiors had already informed him that he needed to bring Lin Ming to attend the banquet.

“For this banquet, eight great sects have arrived to attend the celebrations. There are more than 10 Revolving Core masters and 100 Xiantian masters. Nearly everyone else that isn’t a Xiantian master is a core disciple of their sect, and each one has talent comparable to a monstrous genius. Heh, such a great scene, let alone you, even I rarely see this. Don’t make a fuss about everything just because you’re a newbie, otherwise you’ll lose face.”

As Zhang Zhen spoke, he looked over Lin Ming’s clothing to see if there were any faults. Since eight great sects had gathered together, everything had become a matter of the sect’s honor. Naturally, no one could slack off in any aspect.

Lin Ming smiled and nodded. Although this Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang was a bit arrogant and overly stiff, his heart actually wasn’t too bad. These days he had taught Lin Ming many of the rules and customs of Divine Phoenix Island.

“Those that can enter the banquet stage are already famous characters. You’re a bit young and your cultivation is also low, and you’re even a new disciple, so there shouldn’t be anyone that is willing to take the initiative to challenge you. Just have a good time and eat everything you can. This birthday banquet has the best feast with delicacies from everywhere. If you eat a big meal, it will be equivalent to many years of hard earned cultivation for a common martial artist.”

“Also, if someone challenges you and they are a bit older, you don’t have to bother with them. There will be some senior-

apprentice brothers that will stand up for you. You can compare skills with someone who's close to your level though, but don't go beyond that. Understand?"

"I understand." Lin Ming didn't refute Zhang Zhen's words. The scenario that no one would take initiative to challenge him was only Zhang Zhen's wishful thinking. As Lin Ming had walked down the road these past days, he could feel the gaze of others on him. There were disciples of Thundercrest Sect, and also disciples of Storm Valley.

Lin Ming didn't know any of these people. They were probably ordered to bother him at the behest of others after arriving at Divine Phoenix Island.

Zhang Zhen looked at the time and said, "The birthday banquet will begin in half an hour. Let's go over now."

Chapter 357 – To See Blood

Among the countless dangerous and magnificent peaks, there was one peak covered with thick green bamboo that was dozens of feet high.

Within this green bamboo forest, there was a lake with clear rippling water. On this lake was a green hall that seemed to be carved from jade. This was the land of the Blue Luan Faction – Blue Luan Palace. Tianguang Revered Master was a Vice Island Master of Divine Phoenix Island, and was also a Great Elder of the Blue Luan Faction. His 400th year birthday banquet would be held here.

As Lin Ming arrived at Blue Luan Palace with Zhang Zhen, less than a third of the seats were filled. Most of them were juniors, and not even the direct disciples of the sects had arrived yet.

“Little Junior-apprentice Sister, that is Lin Ming.”

At a corner of Blue Luan Palace’s square, Zhan Yunjian was pointing at Lin Ming as he spoke to a purple-clothed girl. He wasn’t afraid that Lin Ming would find him looking at him, because it wasn’t anything out of the ordinary.

“16 year old late Pulse Condensation period? Not bad.” The purple-clothed girl stroked her smooth and pointed chin as she gazed at her opponent for this banquet, her words sounding a bit old.

Zhan Yunjian wanted to laugh. He thought to himself, wasn’t

this little girl only 17 years old?

“Mm, that’s right. He is a junior of Divine Phoenix Island who is well regarded by Fairy Maiden Qianyu. However, Divine Phoenix Island is a bit lacking in talent these days. Ever since the Saint rank talents Fairy Maiden Qianyu and Fairy Maiden Bingyun appeared, there hasn’t been any outstanding heroic elite in the current young generation. Even the Vermillion Bird Faction chief disciple Mu Dingshan and the Blue Luan Faction chief disciple Mu Xiaoqing aren’t any better than the direct disciples of the seven sects from the Five Element Region.” As Zhan Yunjian spoke, he sighed, “Divine Phoenix Island has really had a great stroke of luck. Even if the next few generations of Divine Phoenix Island are all failures, as long as Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun exist, then Divine Phoenix Island will prosper for the next several hundred years.”

In the minds of the many young heroes and elites, a Saint level talent was like an unattainable peak that they could never approach. Even the arrogant Zhan Yunjian had to acknowledge the difference between him and a Saint level talent. This sort of talent would only appear in a fourth-grade sect every hundred years; it was stroke of fate that couldn’t be forced.

After listening to Zhan Yunjian, the purple-clothed girl smiled, extremely bright and happily.

“Mm? Why are you smiling?” Zhan Yunjian asked.

“Hehe, I’m just smiling, it’s nothing.” The purple-clothed girl was clearly hiding something. A 17 year old girl had limited trust, and her mood was written all over her face.

Zhan Yunjian was puzzled; what caused this little girl to be so happy?

Was she implying that the Thundercrest Sect also had a Saint level talent?

As he thought of this, Zhan Yunjian's expression changed. Then, he thought of it some more and shook his head. 'It's unlikely. The seven sects of the Five Element Region all closely monitor each other; even I'm familiar with the direct disciple of the Thundercrest Sect. If they have a Saint level talent then it's impossible that I wouldn't have heard a rumor of it.'

As Zhan Yunjian thought to himself, he wasn't too sure in his heart. If this was true, then the balance between the seven great sects of the Five Element Region would be broken. Once a Saint level talent grew up, it would be hard to find a worthy opponent for them!

After half an hour passed, more and more people began filtering into Blue Luan Palace. Many important figures began arriving one after another. Even in a fourth-grade sect, Revolving Core masters weren't too common.

Tianguang Revered Master finally arrived. He wore a long green robe, and he had a three foot long white beard. His emitted a very calm and extraordinary temperament.

Behind him followed several disciples, and even Mu Qianyu was

among them. As Lin Ming saw Mu Qianyu, he was stunned for a bit.

‘Mm... something feels off?’

As he noticed her blue clothing, Lin Ming suddenly realised that this woman was Mu Qianyu’s younger sister, Mu Bingyun. He had heard that Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun were twin sisters, but normally there would be some differences even between twins. However Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun seemed almost entirely alike; there wasn’t even a mark on their face to distinguish between them.

There was only a slight difference between their temperaments. It seemed that Mu Bingyun was a bit less noble, a bit icier, and a bit more indifferent.

Throughout the entire time, Mu Bingyun silently followed behind Tianguang Revered Master.

As if it were arranged, right after Tianguang Revered Master arrived, the old Revolving Core masters of the eight sects soon followed. The front door opened wide, and an old man in a red robe walked in with a group of disciples. This old man’s entire face was red all over, and his steps were light. He and his group had a ball of sacred flames embroidered on their chests – these were all disciples from the Sunfire Sect.

“Haha, Mu Tianguang, how have you been? You haven’t changed in such a long time!” The old man smiled. If this old man was able

to call Tianguang Revered Master by his full name, then he was naturally a character on the same level as Tianguang Revered Master.

“Haha, I didn’t think the Sunfire Sect Sovereign would personally come. This old man truly has face!” Mu Tianguang cupped his fists together. Obviously, he and the Sunfire Sect Sovereign were old friends.

As the two old men greeted each other and exchanged some small talk, Lin Ming noticed that there was a red-robed girl following behind the Sunfire Sovereign. She looked around 18-19 years old, and her cultivation was at the early Houtian realm. She was the girl known as the Sunfire Princess, Huo Ruyan.

At this point, all eyes had gathered on Huo Ruyan, even more so than the Sunfire Sovereign. After all, the majority of those present were young heroes and elites. A high level figure like the Sunfire Sovereign had no relation to them, so they wouldn’t pay attention to someone like him. But as for another young heroic elite like Huo Ruyan, she was someone that everyone noticed. After all, a bit later from now, they might have to challenge her in a contest.

As the disciples of the Sunfire Sect took their seats, they were soon followed by those from the Thundercrest Sect. What surprised Lin Ming was that even the Thundercrest Sect Sovereign himself had personally come.

It stood to reason that a normal Revolving Core master would come to this birthday banquet, but a Sovereign wouldn’t personally attend. It had to be known that there were around 20

some high-level figures like Tianguang Revered Master in the great sects of the Five Element Region and the South Horizon Region. If the sect Sovereigns were to attend all the century birthday celebrations of these figures, they would have to make a trip every five years. Making such a long and distant journey was an arduous event, and it wasn't like the various sect Sovereigns didn't have anything else to do.

After the Thundercrest Sect arrived, those from the Deep Earth Sect, Arctic Ice Palace, and Golden Bell Mountain also arrived. Most of those that came were Sovereigns of their sect, and the worst among them were Vice Sovereigns, this really surprised Lin Ming.

Did Tianguang Revered Master really have such great face? A century birthday celebration actually had so many Sovereigns in attendance?

Finally, the last one to appear was the old lady Yuhuang of Divine Phoenix Island. As an Island Master of Divine Phoenix Island and also the leader of the Vermillion Bird Faction, old lady Yuhuang had a status that was even higher than Tianguang Revered Master. All the Sovereigns cupped their hands together. Of the entire audience present, old lady Yuhuang was the strongest; no one dared to disrespect her.

However, old lady Yuhuang had a very unpleasant expression. She gave a few casual smiles, and then sat in the seat of honor, not speaking as an awkward silence and sullen atmosphere floated around her.

Tianguang Revered Master was a bit embarrassed. He stood up, raised his glass and said, “Everyone who has arrived today has shown me the highest honor. First, I will raise a cup to you all!”

As Tianguang Revered Master spoke, he drank a toast to all the guests and the guests all raised their glasses too, offering a number of birthday congratulations and speeches. Then, the atmosphere of the banquet was revived.

Lin Ming couldn't help but whisper, “How come High Master Yuhuang is looking at the eight sect Sovereigns with such a dour expression?”

Zhang Zhen, who was sitting near Lin Ming, heard his question. He reluctantly said, “I don't know why, but I guess it's because the talks of the alliance didn't go too well...”

“Alliance?” Lin Ming was stunned, and then immediately understood. “An alliance to go against the South Sea Demon Region?”

“Mm, yes.”

Lin Ming had a flash of insight. No wonder so many Sovereigns and Vice Sovereigns had arrived. They actually came to discuss such an important matter. It seemed that Tianguang Revered Master's birthday banquet was just a ruse, and the truth was that they came to discuss an alliance to resist the South Sea Demon Region.

A war between superpowers at the rank of Divine Phoenix Island and the South Sea Demon Region wasn't like the wars between two small countries. Just because they declared war on each other didn't mean they would immediately begin. Even though these two great powers had decided to engage each other, there were still many considerations and preparations that had to be made. Before, Divine Phoenix Island had drawn in the 19 third-grade sets, and now it seemed they were even trying to draw in the fourth-grade sects from the Five Element Region. The situation had already escalated to this degree. It was probable that the South Sea Demon Region was also looking for their own allies!

Lin Ming said, "If Divine Phoenix Island is defeated, then would the Five Element Region be able to live their future days in peace? Don't they know about the concept of co-interdependence?"

Zhang Zhen stared at Lin Ming like he was an idiot, obviously looking down on Lin Ming's shallow experience. "What do you mean co-interdependence? Divine Phoenix Island is millions of miles away from the Five Element Region. Even if it was when Silent Demon Emperor City still existed, the Five Element Region didn't suffer a disaster. The reason they came here is to see if we could offer conditions to these old fellows' satisfaction. Now that the talks have broken down, High Master Yuhuang isn't feeling too happy about the situation."

"So it's like this..." Lin Ming was already used to Zhang Zhen looking down on him. But it didn't matter, he really didn't know anything about the Five Element Region.

Zhang Zhen said, "High Master Yuhuang has a very ardent and

strong personality. If you are good to her then she is friendly to everyone. But, if she doesn't feel comfortable, then she doesn't care about giving anyone face. You can see from her expression that she's not hiding anything at all. It looks like this banquet is going to be a lively one."

"Mm? Lively?"

"Hehe, do you think that High Master Yuhuang won't vent her fire here? If matters of the alliance had come to a pleasant agreement, then the atmosphere of the banquet would be enjoyable. But now that things have gone south, it seems that when we compare skills I'll have to be serious; even blood might spill now." As Zhang Zhen spoke, he seemed to be filled with excitement.

"Uh... will it come that?" Lin Ming's expression changed as he craned his neck.

"Heh, just wait and see. High Master Yuhuang is not in a pleasant mood. If anyone causes her to lose anymore face today, they might anger her at their own peril. Just look at Senior-apprentice Brother Mu Dingshan's appearance." Zhang Zhen winked with his eyes.

Lin Ming glanced at Mu Dingshan and saw that he really did have an extremely bitter and pained expression.

"Does Senior-apprentice Brother Mu not have confidence in himself?"

“How can he have confidence like this? Senior-apprentice Brother is fierce, and he’s no worse than any of the other direct disciple of the Five Element Region, but now it’s one against eight. Oh, well with the Blue Luan Faction’s Mu Xiaoqing, that makes it two against eight. How can they resist so many of them? Now that High Master Yuhuang is so angry, losing like this will mean a miserable future for them.”

“The direct disciples of the Five Element Region aren’t some random weaklings. Even if Senior-apprentice Brother Mu put forth his full strength, it isn’t necessarily true that he’ll defeat them. Since he’s going to be going all-out, it won’t be strange to see blood spill.”

Chapter 358 – Skill Competition

Under old lady Yuhuang's influence, the entire atmosphere of the banquet seemed on edge, as if daggers had already been drawn. Lin Ming could even feel a raging fire that was contained with old lady Yuhuang's eyes. How was this a banquet? It was more like a battlefield on the brink of explosion.

Now, old lady Yuhuang really was full of fire. These old zombies were just too greedy for their own good. In order to request them to send out a few masters, they were like lions that had opened their mouths, completely insatiable. If Divine Phoenix Island had gone along with their conditions, then even if they won the war against the South Sea Demon Region, Divine Phoenix Island would probably drop from a top fourth-grade sect to an ordinary fourth-grade sect. If they wished to reach the threshold of a fifth-grade sect, it would probably take another thousand years of accumulating resources. How could she possibly endure this?

The negotiations had continued for three days, and these old bags had only made some slight unimportant concessions. When it came to those core benefits, they wouldn't let go no matter what. It was as if they already assumed that Divine Phoenix Island wouldn't be able to defeat the South Sea Demon Region, and would come begging for help from the Five Element Region's seven great sects.

Old lady Yuhuang had laid down her pride and reached her bottom line; she had already expected the situation to devolve to this point with these old geezers.

To borrow an early Revolving Core master for one year, they had to pay 30 Heaven Opening Pills. If these were normal times, then requesting such a sky high price was simply robbing them when they were in trouble!

Old lady Yuhuang had stated that if they truly paid such a great price, Divine Phoenix Island would lose a thousand years of accumulation, and fall back to an ordinary fourth-grade sect.

But at this time, the Thundercrest Sect Sovereign had spoken a few words that had caused old lady Yuhuang to nearly go crazy and storm out.

He said, “Falling to an ordinary fourth-grade sect is still better than having your entire sect exterminated.”

As old lady Yuhuang remembered these words, her fingers began to tremble from rage. She turned her head to stare at the Thundercrest Sovereign Lei Jingtian, wishing with her entire being that she could massacre this old man.

However, facing the murderous eyes of old lady Yuhuang, Lei Jingtian was calm, drinking heartily with the guests around, completely disregarded old lady Yuhuang.

“Lei Jingtian! I want see just what’s so great about you!” Old lady Yuhuang shook her glass and the wine inside began to boil; this was the fire-attribute true essence that she was inadvertently exuding.

As the Divine Phoenix Island core disciples that sat near old lady Yuhuang saw the wine in her glass boil, they all felt a nerve-racking horror swell up within them.

This was truly a tragedy. In the upcoming matches, they would need to treat each one as if their life was on the line. Whoever caused old lady Yuhuang to lose face would definitely suffer a miserable fate.

At this moment, Lin Ming was buried to his head in food, eating as much as he could. Suddenly Mu Qianyu's voice resounded in his ears. "Lin Ming, Master isn't too happy at the moment. During this competition it seems as if events will be taken to the extreme. Just do what you have to do, and don't be prodded to action by others. There might even be some martial arts contests with true fighting, be careful that you aren't wounded.

"In addition, the contest isn't just martial artists, but also other skills and abilities. For instance, the Sunfire Sect might challenge our disciples in techniques to control fire. If there are people that try to stir you up to compete, don't immediately answer. The Sunfire Sect has refined their fire controlling techniques for thousands of years. As for you, you just started, so you won't be their match."

Mu Qianyu's voice was filled with concern, and this warmed Lin Ming's heart. He replied, "I know what to do."

"Mm."

After three rounds of drinking, the atmosphere was very lively and festive. Suddenly, old lady Yuhuang smiled and said, “I wonder if everyone is enjoying the festivities?”

“Haha, I am enjoying myself to the max! With such great hospitality, how can I not enjoy myself?” Lei Jingtian stood up, laughing, and said, “However, the wine and food is good, but without dance and fighting it’s a bit boring. How about I have some of my Thundercrest Sect’s disciples go onstage to display some of their poor techniques, so that we can enliven this scene a bit!”

As Lei Jingtian finished speaking, a 16 or 17 year old boy leapt onto the stage. He wore purple clothes and had a purple gold crown on his head. He cupped his fists to everyone present and said, “Fellow seniors, fellow martial cultivators, I am Lei Yu, a disciple of the Thundercrest Sect, currently 17 years old. I would like to display some of my insignificant skills and minor abilities, and hope that I can have everyone smile.”

As Lei Yu spoke, he flicked his finger and lightning jumped into his palm. This lightning was like a living purple snake, continuously swaying in Lei Yu’s hands, sometimes growing, sometimes shrinking, but always extremely gorgeous and brilliant.

After a dozen breaths of time, Lei Yu shook his hand and the purple lightning snake turned into a purple jade ribbon. This jade ribbon emitted a very rich thunder origin energy, and didn’t seem any different from purple silk.

“Good!”

“Good!”

Many of the Five Element Region martial artists under the stage began to applaud. However, there wasn't a single martial artist from Divine Phoenix Island that was clapping. The reason for this was old lady Yuhuang who was sitting in the seat of honor. With old lady Yuhuang displaying such a frigid and icy expression, who would dare to clap in her presence?

A Vermillion Bird Faction disciple couldn't sit still and jumped onstage. He said, “Brother Lei Yu has quite the amazing skill. I also happen to understand some similar small tricks, I wonder if I could compare with Brother Lei Yu?”

The disciple didn't wait for Lei Yu to respond before he waved his hand and a fiery serpent shot into the sky. After it flashed, it turned into a chain of flame. The chain converged, turning into a red chain that was no different from a real chain, even reflecting light like metal would. It was just like a fine iron chain that had been heated red in flames.

This was exactly the fire controlling technique that was covered in the first layer of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ – Flame Chains. Lin Ming also knew this technique.

Huala!

The red chain intertwined with the purple silk ribbon. The two disciples seemed to be friendly towards each other, but as soon as

they chains and silk twisted together, the two went wild, putting their full strength into defeating the other!

The chain tightened around the silk ribbon, going taut. Thunder and fire flashed. Neither of them stepped back an inch, each of them using the full extent of their strength. After ten breaths of time, there was the sound of silk ripping as the purple silk ribbon was torn in half, but the red chain was in fine condition.

“Haha, I had wanted to compare strength with Brother Lei Yu and gain some good fortune from this banquet, but I didn’t think I would actually tear apart Brother Lei Yu’s lightning silk ribbon. I truly apologize.”

Lei Yu’s expression was ashen. He coldly snorted and then walked offstage. The disciples of Divine Phoenix Island had a very smug and proud expression on their faces. The Divine Phoenix Island disciple turned towards old lady Yuhuang to claim some credit, but as soon as he saw her icy expression, all hope of any accolades soon turned to dust.

This was just the beginning. In a match between two forgettable disciples, whoever won had no effect at all. Against the high-level characters of the sects, this was only worth a laugh.

“Looks like this is going to blow up...” Zhang Zhen clicked his tongue. He turned to Lin Ming and said, “Do you want to go up and show off a bit? If you want to go on you should hurry up. Right now only the most basic core disciples enter the stage. Soon, the middle ranked ones will go up, and then the top ranked disciples. Above those are the direct disciples!

“At that time, you won’t have a chance to show off any more. Just do as I say and take advantage of the moment. Go and challenge someone you’re sure you can take, otherwise you’ll embarrass yourself.”

Lin Ming was the youngest of everyone present. As long as he defeated a disciple that was 17 to 18 years old, to Zhang Zhen, that was already a very flagrant display of his skills.

“I’m in no hurry.” Lin Ming smiled. He had already sensed that there were people from Storm Valley that were eyeing him, especially the purple-clothed girl from the Thundercrest Sect. This entire time she had been staring at him with extreme provocation in her eyes. Even if he didn’t go up, soon there would be people naming him in their challenge.

Once the matches began, they wouldn’t stop.

Just after the match between the two ended, more people walked on stage.

A Divine Phoenix Island Blue Luan Faction core disciple challenged an Arctic Ice Palace Disciple in ice skating techniques. Cold light flashed as their ice skates cut across the ice, but finally, the Blue Luan Faction girl managed to break apart her opponent’s skates, gaining another victory.

What was happening now was a comparison of skills, rather than a head-on match of strength.

In the flash, 6 or 7 matches had already passed. Zhang Zhen also went on stage. He was named by the purple-clothed girl from the Thundercrest Sect. Her name was Zhou Xiaoling, and she was 17 years old. She had a baby face, and smiled with a harmless expression.

Lin Ming was already aware that Zhou Xiaoling had locked onto him. During this banquet, it was inevitable that he would fight her. The reason that she had called out Zhang Zhen was most likely because she saw Zhang Zhen walk with him, and wanted to use him as a demonstration of her meaning.

“Do you know me?” Zhang Zhen was stunned for a moment. His opponent could only be described as a charming and cute girl; she gave off a rather pleasant aura.

Zhang Zhen was in an excellent mood. Such a beautiful young girl had actually remembered him.

The young girl giggled, not answering. This Zhang Zhen was quite thick-headed.

‘This beautiful girl has a very sweet smile. I didn’t think she would know my name, but she actually challenged me by naming me. Is it possible that she has a favorable impression of me, then especially made inquiries about me and wanted to contest in martial arts in order to better know me?’

This was the fantasy that was inevitably produced by such a

narcissistic man. Especially when the other party had such a sweet smile.

“Vermillion Bird Faction core disciple Zhang Zhen, just reached 18 this year. Please advise.”

Zhang Zhen also introduced himself. Everyone that went on stage had to report their age. Normally speaking, when disciples fought, the greatest difference between their age could only be around a year. This was the fairest method, and it also made it so that even if they lost it wouldn't be too ugly.

Although Zhang Zhen had a good impression of this beautiful girl, he didn't dare to underestimate her. Anyone that dared to enter the stage wouldn't be weak. He guessed that he would only need to go onstage once, and there was no way he could let himself be defeated here like this. He shook his hand, and a fire python sprang into the air, clawing the skies.

This was the meaning of comparing skills.

Zhou Xiaoling's two hands moved, and a thin ribbon of purple silk flew into the air. This one move caused Lin Ming to sigh in his heart; this little girl was quite adept at controlling thunder. She could directly let loose a ribbon of purple silk, and didn't even need to transform the thunder beforehand.

Zhang Zhen's expression was solemn. The fire python fought with the thin ribbon of purple silk for a moment, and in just a few breaths of time, there was a shattering sound as the purple-clothed

girls silk ribbon tore the fire python in half.

Zhang Zhen immediately flushed red. He looked at the fire python that was still struggling in the air. As he faced this young girl Zhou Xiaoling that was a full head shorter than him, he wished that he could find a hole to crawl into.

‘This little girl that came out of nowhere is just too abnormal! Her cultivation is the same as mine, but she’s a year younger. Yet she was able to cut apart my fire python in just a few breaths of time!’

Chapter 359 – Fury

Zhang Zhen gulped as he sat back down in his seat, distressed. He didn't dare look at how frosty old lady Yuhuang's countenance may have become.

At this moment, Zhou Xiaoling smiled. She wasn't smiling at Zhang Zhen, but at Lin Ming. The challenge in this smile was very obvious.

"I was too careless, far too careless, I actually looked down on such a little girl." Zhang Zhen was ashamed. He was originally a very arrogant individual. Losing was one thing, but the one he lost to was not only a year younger than him, but also a woman.

"My fire controlling technique isn't good enough. If we compared martial arts, I might not lose to her." As Zhang Zhen thought back, he created another flimsy excuse in order to save whatever face he had left.

Lin Ming smiled, not bursting his bubble. After all, the reason Zhang Zhen was in such dire straits was because of him. This Thundercrest Sect girl was obviously aiming at him. Without a doubt, she was someone who was at the rank of a direct disciple. Although she was young, in another two to three years, Zhou Xiaoling would most likely become someone who was equal to the Sunfire Princess or the Thunderclap. Zhang Zhen naturally wasn't her match.

Until now, there had been a total of seven matches. Divine

Phoenix Island had lost four and won three. Although they were falling a bit behind, Divine Phoenix Island was still one against six. To have this sort of result was already very good. Of the eight sects that had come, the South Horizon Region's Supreme Mystery Temple and Dire Space Sect hadn't taken action. They probably cared about maintaining their friendship because they shared the same region, and didn't try to challenge Divine Phoenix Island. If the South Sea Demon Region was ever restored to the same grandiosity to the degree of Silent Demon Emperor City, then their days wouldn't be much better. For them, it was better to yield to Divine Phoenix Island and accept their bottom line offer.

This time, at the seat of honor, old lady Yuhuang's expression wasn't the least bit relieved or happy. She was well aware that no matter how pleasant or humble she became, it was not possible to offset the greediness of the Five Element Region sects. Those old bags wouldn't ever accept any concessions.

So it was better to just meet them head-on. In the world of martial artists, there was a prevailing rule – if one couldn't convince them, then defeat them. Strength was the best bargaining chip. If Divine Phoenix Island could win a total victory at this comparison of skills, then the other parties would obviously be at a disadvantage at the negotiating table. This invisible momentum was greatly beneficial to any kind of diplomacy.

But as old lady Yuhuang thought of Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing's strength, she was ultimately a bit doubtful. Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoling were strong; they would definitely have a chance of defeating any of the chief disciples from the Five Element Region's sects. But, to have the two of them fight continuous opponents would put an extreme pressure on them,

and would be very hard for them to do.

Of the seven great sects from the Five Element Region, the Verdant Wood Sect didn't come to the birthday celebrations because of faults within their younger generation. As for the South Horizon Region's Supreme Mystery Temple and Dire Space Sect, they wouldn't take action against them. Thus, Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing were two against six!

Besides Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing, there was also Lin Ming. Yu'er had strongly recommended him based on his strength, so he should be able to show some skills. But, Lin Ming was inevitably too young, and his ability was insufficient for the challenges ahead. He was also a bit young at 16 or 17 years of age. To have him share the burden of Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing would be very difficult for him.

.....

After Zhou Xiaoling left the stage, Zhan Yunjian sighed. These years, the Thundercrest Sect was becoming increasingly fierce. In a few years, even he might not be able to look down on her.

The Verdant Wood Sect had already produced two continual generations of waste. As for the Thunderclap Sect, they produced two top second rank talents in the Thunderclap and Zhou Xiaoling. The balance of the Five Element Region's seven great sects was becoming increasingly unstable.

As Zhan Yunjian was thinking, he noticed that Divine Phoenix

Island's Yan Fuhong was winking at him from afar, indicating for him to make his move.

Zhan Yunjian shook his head, sighing. This Yan Fuhong's jealousy and pride was too heavy on his soul. Such a person would never have great achievements.

As he thought about it, he turned to the junior-apprentice brother near him and said, "Junhui, go and challenge Lin Ming."

"Hehe, you finally want me to make a move?" The youth named Ma Junhui twisted his neck, looking at Lin Ming like a wolf spotting his prey, a rabid excitement dawning in his eyes.

If he managed to injure Lin Ming so that he needed a day to recover in bed, he would be given five medium-grade true essence stones. If he injured Lin Ming so that he needed 20 days, then he would receive 100 medium-grade true essence stones.

If he could damage Lin Ming's meridians and make him need months to recover and delay his cultivation, he would receive 300 medium-grade true essence stones. This amount of true essence stones was equal to the resources he received in an entire year.

As for how to do so in a comparison of skills, Ma Junhui didn't take it too seriously. In a battle between juniors, often one would become too angry and injure the other. If he used his full strength, how could Lin Ming not be injured?

Besides, there was a vast murderous intent that flooded the entire stage. The top characters of both sides were anxious to massacre the other party. As long as he didn't kill anyone, then a bit of blood wasn't anything at all!

“Will that Yan fellow keep his promise?” Ma Junhui asked as he cracked his knuckles.

“He will. He's already given me 50 medium-grade true essence stones as a deposit.”

“Hehe, that's good. I just happen to be lacking true essence stones for practice, and now someone's just delivered them to me.” Ma Junhui thrillingly said as he licked his lips.

“Don't underestimate him, that boy isn't simple. For him to reach the late Pulse Condensation period at 16 is already very good. Not only that, but Mu Qianyu thinks highly of his strength. I fear his talent is probably on the same level as someone like the Sunfire Princess, if not more so.” Zhan Yunjian warned.

“Who cares how good his talent is. How can a late Pulse Condensation boy challenge my half-step Houtian cultivation? This boy has potential, however, he's just too young and naïve.” Ma Junhui said as he leapt up. With the assistance of his wind-attribute true essence, he flashed onto the stage.

“Storm Valley's Ma Junhui, 18 years old. I challenge all heroes present!” Ma Junhui said as he cupped his fists across his chest.

“Ma Junhui, he came up so quickly. Before, I thought that it would be someone like Zhou Xiaoling coming on stage, but it seems that the Storm Valley core disciple Ma Junhui wants to challenge someone. I remember he’s at the upper middle ranks of the core disciples.” The disciples of the Five Element Region’s seven great sects had a good understanding of each other. The name Ma Junhui was known by many people.

“Mm. It’s mostly been the lower or middle rank core disciples going on stage. Now that Ma Junhui has gone onstage, the level of the matches has increased yet again. It might difficult for us to find an opportunity to display our skills. I wonder who made Ma Junhui so anxious that he jumped up so early to challenge them.”

As the disciples of the Five Element Region murmured to themselves, Ma Junhui swept his gaze past the Divine Phoenix Island disciples. He pointed to Lin Ming and said, “You’re the one called Lin Ming right? Do you dare to face me?”

“What?” Zhang Zhen was the first to be shocked. This kid was too f*cking shameless, didn’t he care about face at all? An 18 year old against a 16 year old, and he actually had the gall to open that big mouth of his?

A two year gap didn’t seem like much, but the truth was to those top talented youths, every day was extremely precious.

Two years was enough to accomplish many things. For instance, Mu Qianyu had reached Pulse Condensation at 15, and that was considered a Saint level talent. However, if she was late by two years and reached Pulse Condensation at 17, then she wouldn’t be

considered much. That was something that any casual student of the Seven Profound Valleys could accomplish. But when Mu Qianyu was 16 years old, she had already stepped into the Houtian realm.

If Lin Ming was given another two years, breaking through to the Houtian realm would be simple; he might even be able to defeat a Xiantian master. That was not a level that someone like Ma Junhui could compare with.

Therefore, in a comparison of skills, it was always between individuals that were similar in age. Even if there was a one year difference, it would usually be the junior challenging the senior. If the tables were reversed, then this despicable action was really looked down on by others.

“Lin Ming, there’s no need to go up. This little punk probably wants to harm you.” Zhang Zhen could feel a dark intent coming from Ma Junhui.

Old lady Yuhuang was silent. She turned to glance and Mu Qianyu and saw Mu Qianyu returning a little nod of the head to her, also not speaking.

“Since this is a boy that Yu’er thinks so highly of, if he can’t even overcome a mere two year gap, he’s no better than Xiaoqing or Dingshan. This old woman wants to see just what sort of surprises you have in store for me.”

Ma Junhui ignored everyone around him that was glaring at him

with disgust. He pointed to Lin Ming as before and shouted, “Boy, do you dare?”

Lin Ming rose up. “I didn’t think that my name would actually reach the Five Element Region; it is truly the highest of honors. Since you challenge me, then I naturally must accompany you.”

As Lin Ming spoke, he directly walked over to the square, ignoring Zhang Zhen’s frantic winking.

“So he’s Lin Ming.”

“Mm. He also live at Parasol Tree Pavilion. This is my first time seeing him. I heard that he is 16 years old, and that Her Highness Qianyu thinks very highly of him.”

“Then we’ll see just how strong he is. If he can deal with that Ma Junhui then he has some skill, but it isn’t a shame if he loses either.”

Lin Ming was only known to a few people from the Five Element Region, but he was already famous throughout the entire Divine Phoenix Island. He was a talent that Mu Qianyu valued, and one that she had personally recruited from the Seven Profound Valleys. As soon as he entered the sect, he was admitted to the Parasol Tree Pavilion. All of this was enough to make him the focus of the disciples from Divine Phoenix Island.

“Hehe, you think I heard your name in the Five Element Regions

because of some glorious deed you accomplished? I only heard that you betrayed your sect and whored yourself out to Divine Phoenix Island to become a core disciple. Am I right?”

Ma Junhui sneered, his words extremely poisonous and insidious. He was intentionally trying to provoke Lin Ming, so that it would be a completely justifiable action to wound him to the point that he would need to recuperate in bed.

“Insolence!”

Ma Junhui’s voice had just fallen when he heard a voice like a thunderclap explode in his ears. He instantly turned white, forced back several steps.

“Ignorant boy, you dare to spread such preposterous talk!?” Old lady Yuhuang slapped her right hand against her chair, and a terrifying surge of energy flooded out towards Ma Junhui. Ma Junhui only felt his entire body go ice-cold, as if he were a tiny boat about to be overturned in a endlessly churning ocean.

Ma Junhui was terrified. He didn’t think that with just a few words, Mu Yuhuang would not care about her status as a Revolving Core master and move against a junior.

But at this moment, a surge of wind rolled forwards, protecting Ma Junhui’s body, sweeping away that terrifying tide of energy. A black-clothed old man stood up and said, “High Master Yuhuang, please calm down. Junhui, what sort of utter nonsense are you speaking of! Hurry up and apologize!”

Ma Junhui let out a breath of relief as the dangerous moment passed. This old woman was an utterly crazy old bag. He had just mocked Lin Ming, but hadn't cursed her at all. How many days had Lin Ming been in the sect and how many times had he seen old lady Yuhuang, for her to move against him like this?

The truth was that Ma Junhui was too negligent. When he said that Lin Ming had whored himself out, that was no different than slandering Mu Qianyu's crystal clear reputation. Mu Qianyu was Mu Yuhuang's most beloved disciple; how could she tolerate someone disparaging her?

Lin Ming glanced at Mu Qianyu whose expression wasn't looking too good, and his eyes suddenly fell to sub-zero temperatures. He turned to Ma Junhui, his voice desolate and somber as he said, "You want to intentionally provoke me into a rage so that I'll participate in some little deathmatch with you? Well, then I must congratulate you. You have succeeded."

Chapter 360 – Don't Worry

Although the banquet stage was brimming with tension, that didn't mean everyone would lose their sense of decorum or reasoning. Those offensive words that Ma Junhui had said a moment ago were brainless; they were words that a mentally normal person would never say.

Lin Ming didn't have any past enmity with Ma Junhui, nor any injustice. In fact, Lin Ming had never met Ma Junhui. Ma Junhui was just like a rabid dog that was randomly biting others; If he wasn't instigated by others, this was still his personality.

Ma Junhui laughed as he sneered, saying, "You're right, I really am trying to provoke you. Those superficial skill matches that have happened so far are just too boring. However, I wasn't lying when I said that you whored yourself out to become a Divine Phoenix Island core disciple; there really is a rumor that is spreading around like that. As they say, where there's smoke there's fire. Today, how about I be your touchstone to see just how true this rumor is, hmm?"

"Touchstone? You really think highly of yourself." Lin Ming jeered, "I'm afraid your touchstone will break with just a little touch!"

As Lin Ming spoke he took out the Heaven Profound Soft Spear from his spatial ring. Ever since he had acquired the Purple Comet Spear, he hadn't used this silver spear of his.

However, the Purple Comet Spear was a top high-grade earth-step treasure, it was just too shocking. Ancestor Chi Yan had left behind a camouflage array on the Purple Comet Spear, and no one below Ancestor Chi Yan's cultivation should be able to see the truth. However, there were many old Sovereigns here that had keen eyesight and perception, so surely there would be those that recognized it.

A top high-grade earth-step treasure was something that even a Revolving Core master would covet. Although Lin Ming had Divine Phoenix Island backing him and didn't fear exposing the Purple Comet Spear, it was best to keep this news as quiet as possible. With so many people here, it would undoubtedly spread in less than a day.

Ma Junhui saw Lin Ming take out a medium-grade human-step silver spear from his spatial ring and laughed, "Am I seeing things? You are a core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island, but you actually use such a trashy weapon? Even a third-grade sect's direct disciple can obtain an earth-step weapon, but here you are using a medium-grade human-step weapon? Are you joking with me?"

Lin Ming's lips curled up in a smile. If everyone was being friendly and having a nice match, then he wouldn't mind leaving his opponent some face. But now this idiot was being so aggressive and was obviously being strung on by someone else. Naturally, he wouldn't forgive him so lightly.

"To deal with low-level trash like you, my empty hands would have been enough. But now my spear wants to see a drop of blood. After five spear moves, if you can still stand, then consider me

having lost.”

Lin Ming’s words shocked everyone present.

His empty hands were enough?

He took out the spear to see a drop of blood?

Defeat Ma Junhui in five moves or it would be his loss?

Zhan Yunjian looked at Lin Ming with relish; this boy was truly confident in himself. He turned to glance at the Thundercrest Sect’s Zhou Xiaoling, and saw that the little girl appeared extremely excited, obviously looking forward to watching this match.

“Oh? You also think Lin Ming will win in five moves?” Zhan Yunjian asked with a true essence sound transmission.

“Hehe, I don’t know if he’ll win or not, but whatever the outcome, things will be very interesting after five moves. There will definitely be a side that suffers a miserable loss. I’m looking forward to seeing the loser’s face. The loser might even lose his confidence and ruin his path of martial cultivation, and never be able to recover. How can I not be excited about something so fun?

As Zhan Yunjian heard the innocent tone in which Zhou Xiaoling spoke, he felt chills crawl up his spine. When this little girl grew up, she would definitely be a grade A disaster.

Of those present, the disciples of the Five Element Region were mostly watching for fun. But as for the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island, they had a variety of thoughts. There were some that were worried for Lin Ming like Zhang Zhen, but there were also those that were extremely jealous and angry, and wanted to see Lin Ming beaten into the ground, such as Yan Fuhong.

Yan Fuhong had a gloating smile strung across his face, and he fiddled with his ring finger as he thought to himself, 'He truly came from a poor land, he actually took out a medium-grade human-step treasure to disgrace himself. I had just wanted to have someone cripple you for a bit so that you'd miss out on the chance to enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, but now it seems that even your heart of martial arts will be damaged. What an idiot, you actually dug your own grave.'

Mu Yuhuang was silent. She looked at Mu Qianyu, an obvious question in her eye.

Mu Qianyu was speechless; this Lin Ming really made one worry. It was fine to just beat this fellow up, but now Lin Ming drew himself into a corner. Facing Mu Yuhuang's questioning gaze, Mu Qianyu clenched her teeth and nodded. She still had full faith in Lin Ming.

Mu Yuhuang frowned, "Didn't you say that that old fool Chi Yan made a top high-grade earth-step treasure spear for Lin Ming? And it was also better than your Vermillion Bird sword? How come he isn't using it?"

“This...” Mu Qianyu forced a smile. “He probably doesn’t want to stir up any trouble by revealing it...”

Mu Yuhuang coldly said, “If he stirs up any trouble, he still has our Divine Phoenix Island supporting him. At least it’s much better than losing. Taking out such a trashy spear is truly disgraceful, what is he going to do if it breaks? Once his weapon breaks, he might not even be able to settle the match in five moves. Even if his strength is greater than his opponent’s, he’ll still be laughed at by others. I hope he knows what he’s doing and doesn’t make himself into the butt of a joke.”

After Ma Junhui listened to Lin Ming’s words, he didn’t even get mad – he just laughed. He looked at Lin Ming like he was an idiot and said, “Have you gone dumb today? I’ll stand here and see just how you will defeat me!”

Lin Ming held the spear in his right hand and used his left hand to trace the cool shaft, a familiar feeling spreading through his body. He had used this Heavy Profound Soft Spear for the longest time. It had been with him when he defeated Zhang Guanyu, when he had fled through the Southern Wilderness, and it had even accompanied him throughout the entire Seven Profound Valleys’ Total Faction Martial Meeting.

When Lin Ming had said he would defeat Ma Junhui in five moves, he had already left a great deal of room for himself. When Lin Ming had just started Tempering Marrow, he was already able to totally defeat the peak Houtian Huang Zixuan. But this Ma Junhui was only a half-step Houtian. So what if he was a fourth-grade sect’s talent? Not just that, but Lin Ming had already

completed 20% of Tempering Marrow.

As Lin Ming's feet trod the floor, under the support of Golden Roc Shattering the Void, his speed instantly reached the limit. His body became a series of phantoms as an azure light condensed on the spearpoint, shooting straight towards Ma Junhui's chest!

"I'll cut your stupid garbage spear!" Ma Junhui shouted and slashed with his blue sword, seven or eight wind blades howled forth. These wind blades whistled through the air with a grating sound like a saber carving through glass.

Facing these wind blades, Lin Ming neither blocked nor evaded; he thrust his spear straight through.

The endless azure true essence carried the vibrating power of Flow like Silk; it smashed against the wind blades!

Ping ping ping ping ping ping!

With a series of sounds like crystal breaking, all of Ma Junhui's wind blades were shattered. But, Lin Ming's spear potential didn't diminish at all; the spear light was only ten feet away from Ma Junhui.

"Mm!?"

Ma Junhui was shocked. He stretched out his hand and blue wind origin energy gathered around him, forming a whirlwind around

his body.

“Wind Shadow Shield!”

Peng!

Ma Junhui hadn't even finished yelling 'Wind Shadow Shield' when the Heavy Profound Soft Spear smashed into the whirlwind, creating a whistling sound that pierced the ears. The Heavy Profound Soft Spear only slowed down for the tiniest bit, but then continued piercing through!

“What!?”

Mu Junhui's complexion finally completely changed. His defensive power was outstanding, and he was even able to borrow the power of wind to create the Wind Shadow Shield, yet he couldn't even block a single attack? He retreated, but the Heavy Profound Soft Spear homed in on him!

“Cool Breeze Cut!”

Ma Junhui's eyes were cold. He gave a loud shout and slashed at the Heavy Profound Soft Spear. The sword in his hand was a low-grade earth-step treasure. Even if he didn't use any true essence, it could still cut a medium-grade human-step treasure in half!

Now that he had even used a sword skill, he should have been able to cut apart Lin Ming's spear like a candle. But he never

thought that as he cut down on the Heavy Profound Soft Spear, his sword would be mired by the endlessly strong azure true essence, and that even the true essence he had poured into his sword would all be scattered by a strange vibrating strength.

What the hell kind of cultivation method was this?

Ma Junhui couldn't believe what was happening. He didn't even have time to think as this spear potential rushed towards him like a massive tsunami. Even after he had tried to cancel it out with three moves, it still contained a terrifying power.

All of the space around him seemed to be locked down, and the wind origin energy ran wild. The overwhelming spear light smashed into Ma Junhui, hitting him and his flexible armor.

In that moment, Ma Junhui felt like he had been struck by a massive hammer. A giant gaping hole was twisted into his high-grade human-step flexible armor, and even the true essence in his body was smashed apart like broken porcelain. Ma Junhui spat out a mouthful of blood before flying several dozens of feet backwards. There was only a banging sound as Ma Junhui struck several birthday banquet tables. His entire body was covered with wine and food, and also small bits of broken jade dishes.

Because the spear light had been countered a great deal, Ma Junhui hadn't been severely injured. However, his pride had been ruined and brought to the ground. He crawled up from the floor, his lips twitching, his eyes red with blood, and his face flushed with anger.

The entire hall was quiet, even the disciples of the Five Element Region were stunned silly. They hadn't expected such a scene to happen. In just a single move, Ma Junhui had been struck backwards like an insect. Although he wasn't wounded too seriously, Ma Junhui had used three moves to block Lin Ming's spear, yet the end result was this. This gap in their strength was obvious. They were simply on completely different levels.

As the entire audience was silent, a bright laughter like the jingling of silver bells resounded at this untimely moment. Zhou Xiaoling laughed as she slapped her table, tears almost running down her cheeks.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Ma, hurry up and take off those noodles around your neck, I'm going to die laughing here! Hahaha!”

At this time, a bowl of birthday noodles hung around his neck. These noodles were made with special spirit valley ingredients and were especially chewy; they hadn't even broken yet. There were even drops of sauce streaming down the ends.

Ma Junhui looked like he had been bitten by a snake. He tore off the noodles around his neck, his face turning from red to purple.

Seeing this, many Divine Phoenix Island disciples wanted to laugh, but it was quite contemptible to laugh in this sort of situation, so they restrained themselves even though it was hard to endure.

However, those that repressed their laughs didn't include Zhang Zhen. Zhang Zhen's eyes were wide as he stared at Lin Ming, a bit stunned. Out of all the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island, he had been the one that had been in contact with Lin Ming the most. He had brought him through the mountain gate, eaten with him, and had taught him most things. He had been leading Lin Ming around for several days, but had no idea just what kind of monstrous genius he had been bringing around.

Mu Qianyu let out a long breath of relief, wanting to rebuke Lin Ming a bit. Although she had confidence in Lin Ming, she wasn't sure what sort of progress he had made these past months, and was a little doubtful of what could happen.

“This Lin Ming, he really does make one worry for him.”

Chapter 361 – Surrounded by Six Sects

“Lin Ming, I’ll kill you!” Ma Junhui was burning with anger from the shame he had received. He gripped the longsword in his hand, a purple layer of light covering the blade. His entire body emitted a blue glow; he was about to unleash his full force.

Lin Ming was calm as before. He held the Heavy Profound Soft Spear straight in his hands, waiting for Ma Junhui to come.

“Enough!” At this time, Storm Valley’s Valley Master gave a cold cough. “A loss is a loss, fall back!”

Ma Junhui’s gathering of true essence was disrupted by Storm Valley’s Valley Master’s cold cough, his face flushing red. He argued, unwilling to accept this outcome, “Honorable Sect Master, I merely underestimated the enemy. I still haven’t even used the ‘Wind Conversion Art’, and I still have the Concept of Wind. I...”

“Shut up!” Storm Valley’s Valley Master was finally angry. “An 18 year old challenging a 16 year old and being sent flying back with a single strike is already disgraceful enough, and yet you still have the face to give an excuse! Hurry up and get out of the way, you are shaming me on that stage!”

Ma Junhui gulped, then glared at Lin Ming with bitter hatred in his eyes as he stepped down in humiliation.

“Boy, just you wait. I will definitely return the favor someday!” Before Ma Junhui left the stage, he sent Lin Ming a sinister true

essence sound transmission. When he had fought a moment ago, he hadn't used the 'Wind Conversion Art' or the Concept of Wind. In his haste, he didn't even fully summon his true essence. In his own foolish self-confidence, he had hypnotized himself into thinking he could never lose to Lin Ming, and this was the reason for his sudden and immediate loss.

Only thinking this made Ma Junhui feel a bit better. He had lost today's match in too miserable a fashion, he didn't even have any face left at all. If he scavenged some reasoning from somewhere, it would have a major effect on his future martial cultivation and confidence.

Lin Ming didn't bother to respond. Against a blithering idiot like Ma Junhui, then there no reason to bother with him. What he was more concerned was just who had spurred Ma Junhui and Zhou Xiaoling to deal with him.

"This boy!" Yan Fuhong clenched his teeth under the stage. Lin Ming's combat strength was secondary. It was Lin Ming's talent that was too terrifying. Ma Junhui was a core disciple of Storm Valley and his talent could be arranged around the upper middle reaches of all the core disciples, yet he was actually swept away by a single one of Lin Ming's spears.

Although Ma Junhui said he had underestimated his enemy and hadn't used his complete strength, didn't Lin Ming not use his complete strength too?

That meant that Lin Ming's talent was at least at the likes of Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing! Maybe he surpassed them! In another

two or three years, Lin Ming would become the second Mu Dingshan.

This caused Yan Fuhong to have a feeling of profound crisis. He had a likely chance of being one of the people able to enter the main Ancient Phoenix Hall of the Divine Phoenix Mystic realm. But if Lin Ming came, then his chances of being selected would be greatly reduced.

By the time Lin Ming walked offstage, Zhang Zhen was stunned. Sitting by Lin Ming, he gulped and said, “Big Brother Lin, you are really fierce!”

Big Brother Lin?

Lin Ming had an amused expression. Zhang Zhen was older than him by two years and was someone that was naturally arrogant to the bones. This was not a good state of mind for anyone to have. To be more accurate, it could be said that this was a condition that every disciple of Divine Phoenix Island had: in the reaches of their hearts, they all looked down on those from smaller sects.

But when meeting a truly amazing individual, such as Mu Dingshan, the Sunfire Princess, and so on, Zhang Zhen lost all of his proud nature and arrogance. If that person was even more amazing, such as Mu Qianyu or Mu Bingyun, then Zhang Zhen would even fall over in worship.

The higher one’s cultivation was, the more they understood just how terrifying these characters were.

“Brother Lin, you’re so strong! Do you think you can win against that Zhou Xiaoling girl?” Zhang Zhen asked as he rubbed his hands, it seemed that he had taken his loss to that little girl to heart.

Lin Ming laughed, “You want me to challenge her and gain back some face for you?”

Zhang Zhen smiled, a bit embarrassed, “I just think that little girl is a bit too rampant...”

Earlier, Zhang Zhen has narcissistically assumed that Zhou Xiaoling had challenged him onstage because she had taken a fancy to him. But after he went onstage, he was defeated in a few blinks of the eye. Finally, Zhang Zhen understood that the reason that little girl had called him up was especially to defeat him; this greatly damaged Zhang Zhen’s self-esteem.

Lin Ming said, “Don’t worry about that Zhou Xiaoling. Even if I don’t bother with her, she will challenge me.”

“Ah?”

Lin Ming didn’t speak any more. He glanced over at Zhou Xiaoling and smiled. She was impishly smiling back at him, and her eyes held mischievous provocation. This girl, she definitely wasn’t someone who was easy to deal with.

Although Lin Ming had sent Ma Junhui flying back with a single spear, he didn't look down on the seven great sects of the Five Element Region. Normally, a fourth-grade sect would have around 10 direct disciples and even more core disciples.

Ma Junhui was only a core disciple ranked around the upper middle reaches, and he was ranked around 20th or so among the disciples of Storm Valley.

The difference between the first disciple and the 20th disciple was humongous. For instance, taking the Seven Profound Valleys as an example, the Total Faction Martial Meeting's tied second and third ranking were Mugu Buyu and Jiang Baoyun, and the 11th place was Fang Qi – the difference in their strength was evident.

But, Ma Junhui's status in Storm Valley was even less than that of Fang Qi in the Seven Profound Valleys. Lin Ming wouldn't look down on Zhou Xiaoling because of Ma Junhui, even if she was only 17 years old.

At this moment, a voice resounded in Lin Ming's ear, it was Mu Qianyu's true essence sound transmission. "Good job! But don't be so hasty next time. Before you figure out your opponent's strength, just have a steady fight with them."

Lin Ming followed the voice and looked at Mu Qianyu, seeing a happy smile touching her lips. He replied, "Don't worry. This Ma Junhui was just too rude, I only wanted to give him a little lesson."

If he defeated Ma Junhui according to proper rules and conduct,

then even if he spat blood it wouldn't mean much. To a martial artist, being injured was a normal event. After recuperating in bed for a few days and taking some pills, they would be spirited soon enough.

But, if he swept away his opponent's face and struck his confidence, this was the most vicious method that left a pressuring mark on his heart. This was the only way that Lin Ming would feel better.

Mu Qianyu knew that the reason Lin Ming had sent Ma Junhui into such a miserable state was because of those words claiming he had whored himself out to become a core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island. Not only did these words castigate Lin Ming, but they also slandered Mu Qianyu's pure reputation.

Lin Ming probably did all this as a means of avenging her honor. Thinking of this, Mu Qianyu smiled, and didn't say anything more.

After that fight a moment ago, Mu Yuhuang's complexion was finally a bit better. Lin Ming truly hadn't disappointed her, it would be no problem for him to enter the top of the second rank talents. If this generation of Divine Phoenix Island could have the trifecta of Mu Dingshan, Mu Xiaoqing, and Lin Ming supporting them, that would truly be a fortuitous event.

As old lady Yuhuang was thinking this, she accidentally caught a glimpse of Lei Jingtian's bright smile, and her face sunk.

“That old fox!”

She hated Lei Jingtian's smile that seemed to think he had everything within his grasp. A few days ago at the negotiation table, this old man had been blocking her at every turn.

“Could this old man have something that he can rely on?”

The matches onstage continued. Ever since Lin Ming and Ma Junhui's battle, no one else competed with their skills or techniques. Now, everyone that went on stage was engaging in true battle.

“Storm Valley core disciple Zhang Lin challenges the heroic youths of Divine Phoenix Island. Does anyone dare to compete with me?” On the center of the stage, a youth in a green robe clearly spoke as he held two swords in his hands.

He was one of the top three ranked core disciples of Storm Valley.

Divine Phoenix Island's martial artists had very ugly expressions. Normally at this sort of banquet competition, besides fellow disciples challenging each other, it was a casual affair for other sects to challenge other sects. Divine Phoenix Island would challenge the sects of the Five Element Region, but the sects of the Five Element Region would also challenge each other. For instance, Golden Bell Mountain, Thundercrest Sect, and Sunfire Sect would also compete against each other.

However, what had continually happened was that the sects of the Five Element Region had gathered today to challenge Divine

Phoenix Island. Now, this Zhang Lin had already spoken words that he was aiming at Divine Phoenix Island.

Divine Phoenix Island was strong, but they were absolutely unable to cope one against six.

“Divine Phoenix Island’s Hua Hong, please advise!” A young girl in red jumped on stage. She was the fifth ranked core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island, and was about the same as Zhang Lin in terms of strength.

After the match began, Zhang Lin didn’t hold back at all. He immediately used the core cultivation method of Storm Valley, the ‘Wind Conversion Art’. It was clear that he was going to go all out from the start.

Hua Hong clenched her teeth and used the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ with determination. She already realized that this would be an uphill battle, and even if she won, she would have to do so using every possible effort, and it would be impossible for her to fight again in the near future.

True essence collided, and wind and fire swirled together onstage. A formidable true essence shockwave surged out, blowing away several nearby tables.

An elder of Divine Phoenix Island who was skilled in array formations moved and sent out several array symbols with his hands, confining all of the terrifying true essence waves within the stage.

After the two individuals exchanged dozens of moves, Hua Hong finally defeated Zhang Lin by the weakest margin. But, she had already been forced to her utter limits.

“My technique is inferior, I admit defeat.” Zhang Lin cupped his hands together across his chest and then stepped down from the stage.

Although Hua Hong had won, her complexion was very pale. She wouldn't be able to restore her energy in a short period of time, and she could already see that the Thundercrest Sect's Zhou Xiaoling was itching for a fight. She obviously was planning on going onstage, and the ones she would challenge would most likely be Divine Phoenix Island disciples.

The top five core disciples of Divine Phoenix Island could match up to the top three core disciples of the Five Element Region's sects. But one against six was the same as six against 18. If this continued, Divine Phoenix Island might reach a situation where no one would be able to go onstage.

“Big Brother Lin, that little girl's thinking of going on stage!” Zhang Zhen had sharp eyes; he had already noticed the malicious intent in Zhou Xiaoling's devious smile.

“Mm. She deliberately waited some time to give me a break so that I could restore my condition, and so it wouldn't appear in poor taste for her to challenge me.” Lin Ming indifferently smiled. The truth was that he hadn't really used any energy at all in his

battle against Ma Junhui. Even if he did consume a great deal of energy, he was able to quickly recover.

In terms of restorative ability, Lin Ming had absolute confidence in himself. After he had entered the Sorcerer Pagoda, his blood vitality was like a raging inferno, and his recovery power was far above and beyond any martial artist of the same level.

Afterwards, he had also completed 20% of Tempering Marrow. Now Lin Ming's restorative strength was even more terrifying than before. Maybe even a Xiantian master might not be able to compare with Lin Ming in terms of recovery power.

Zhou Xiaoling had wanted to give the usual opening remarks and challenge someone to come onstage, but she found that Lin Ming had already stood up. She smiled, revealing her sharp canines. "So you already knew!"

Chapter 362 – Close Contact Combat

As soon as Divine Phoenix Island's Lin Ming and Thundercrest Sect's Zhou Xiaoling walked onstage, it caused an immediate sensation.

Lin Ming and Zhou Xiaoling were both top second rank talents among the juniors. Several years from now, they would be top level characters equal to the Sunfire Princess and Zhan Yunjian. Naturally this attracted the attention of everyone present.

“Lin Ming is 16 and a half years old, and Zhou Xiaoling is 17 years and one month old. There's a seven month difference between them...” There were many nosy individuals that had collected as much information as they could, and were able to pinpoint their ages accurately to the month.

“I think that Lin Ming has a higher chance of winning. For better or worse, that Storm Valley Ma Junhui is still a core disciple ranked in the upper middle reaches. He was sent flying out by Lin Ming in one move; I don't think that's something that Zhou Xiaoling can accomplish.

“Don't be silly, that Ma Junhui was just an idiot, he was far too arrogant. He didn't even treat Lin Ming as a true threat and didn't use the 'Wind Conversion Art'. He deserves to be struck down like a fly. If he was serious, then the gap between Lin Ming and Ma Junhui wouldn't have been so great. I think Lin Ming might not be able to defeat Zhou Xiaoling. Don't forget, she's at the peak of Pulse Condensation, but Lin Ming is only at the late Pulse Condensation period!”

To a true genius, jumping ranks and fighting those above was natural matter. But when the one you were against was another genius, then that was another matter altogether. That was extremely difficult, and every small difference in cultivation was an extremely large gap.

“I think that Zhou Xiaoling has a higher chance of winning. In another half a year, if Lin Ming can reach the peak Pulse Condensation period, then it might be a fair match.”

All the nosy busybodies were speculating on the outcome of Lin Ming and Zhou Xiaoling’s match. To these young heroic elites, they also liked to compare their sense of judgement. In any case, even if they were wrong it wouldn’t be a loss.

Old lady Yuhuang glanced at Mu Qianyu as usual, and Mu Qianyu nodded in return, indicating that this wouldn’t be problem. She had complete confidence in Lin Ming. In truth, a seven month gap wasn’t too great a difference. Even if his opponent was a top second rank talent, Lin Ming should still be able to win.

Seeing Mu Qianyu’s confidence, old lady Yuhuang was much more reassured. She thought to herself, ‘It seems that Lin Ming’s talent is even more remarkable than Dingshan and Xiaoling’s. Yu’er has really found a treasure for my Divine Phoenix Island.’

.....

On the stage, Lin Ming and Zhou Xiaoling were 100 feet apart

from each other.

Lin Ming's mind stirred, and then he asked with a true essence sound transmission, "Miss Zhou, could you tell me who has such a great interest in me that they would send so many people after me?"

Zhou Xiaoling's eyes narrowed. She smiled, replying, "Someone offered 300 medium-grade true essence stones to beat you up really bad. If you defeat me, then I'll tell you. But if you lose, you lay in bed for a month like a good little boy and let me win those true essence stones. How about it?"

There was no foolproof plan in this win, especially since Yan Fuhong had no friendship with Zhan Yunjian. If there was a true investigation, Zhan Yunjian was unlikely to keep Yan Fuhong's secrets for him.

Lin Ming's eyebrows rose in challenge, "Oh, is that a promise?"

"This little lady keeps her word. But, it seems that you're overly confident in defeating me." Zhou Xiaoling unfolded her arms, and purple lightning twisted around her hands, snaking into the air around her, causing the surrounding space to tremble. She had high expectations of Lin Ming's strength. For heroic elites of similar age, engaging in a true battle with someone of similar strength was an extremely rousing and mentally stimulating event.

Lin Ming faintly smiled, "Against a thunder-attribute martial artist, I will always be confident."

He flourished the Heavy Profound Soft Spear, and the silver spearpoint droned as it began to shudder. True essence flooded into the Heretical God Seed and the power of thunder erupted. In a split-second, a purple white electric current surged forth from the spear, tearing the void.

There was the power of thunder that used the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder as its foundation – it was incredibly violent!

Zhou Xiaoling's eyes instantly widened, her originally large eyes almost doubling in size, blinking as she stared at the power of thunder that wrapped around Lin Ming's Heavy Profound Soft Spear.

Those present were also shocked, they didn't think that Lin Ming would be a thunder-attribute martial artist. Wasn't he a disciple of Divine Phoenix Island? How could he be a thunder-attribute martial artist?

The common folk watched for fun but the experts could see the true skill. The elders of the Thundercrest Sect as well as their core disciples' pupils narrowed as they saw Lin Ming release the winding thunder. This power of thunder contained the will of thunder – it absolutely had the support of a Thunder Soul!

Zhou Xiaoling traced her pretty chin, praise on her lips, "I never thought it would be like this. When I listened to that person say you knew how to control thunder, I thought you just had some minor skills. But now it seems like you even have a Thunder Soul!

Hehe, things are getting more and more fun!”

As Zhou Xiaoling spoke, she took out a large golden ring from her spatial ring. This ring was three feet wide, and was as thick as a thumb. Its edges were sharpened, but there was a blunt section that one could grab onto. This was the first time that Lin Ming had seen such a strange weapon.

“Looks like a low-grade earth-step treasure made from Gold Thunder Rock...”

When Lin Ming had his Purple Comet Spear made, he had researched many different thunder-attribute materials, and thus he was able to recognize the ring in Zhou Xiaoling’s hands. This was a weapon made from Gold Thunder Rocks. Although it was worse than the Profound Thunder Stones that were used in his spear, it was still a very good thunder-attribute material.

This ring of Zhou Xiaoling’s was a top low-grade earth-step treasure. It was far superior to the Blood Wave Saber that the Zhang Family from the Seven Profound Territory possessed.

“You aren’t going to switch your spear?” Zhou Xiaoling asked.

“Unnecessary.”

“I don’t want to take advantage of you.” Zhou Xiaoling said, her eyes squinting, “Even if I win, others will say it wasn’t because of my skill.”

Lin Ming thought this was quite funny, this little girl was very confident in herself. “Say that after you’ve won.”

“We’ll know after we fight! Purple Thunder Cut!”

Zhou Xiaoling trod the floor, and her body moved forwards like a slippery fish. The golden ring in her hand was completely engulfed in a shining purple light. The ring rapidly rotated, and arcs of lightning flashed out, turning into a vicious flywheel. Wherever this weapon went, even the air itself seemed to be sliced apart.

The power of this move startled everyone; just how was Lin Ming going to block such a fierce attack?

If that silver spear struck the spinning flywheel, it would probably be cut in half; there was no way to undergo a direct confrontation!

Lin Ming wasn’t nervous or in a hurry. He languidly stepped back, and as the spinning flywheel was about to strike him, he stabbed his spear into the center of the ring. Although the Heavy Profound Soft Spear really couldn’t meet this weapon head on, as long as it was in the center of the ring, it would be absolutely safe.

Zhou Xiaoling’s eyes flashed with a brilliant light.

“You want to avoid a collision? Nice try!”

With a thought, the power of thunder within the flywheel burst out, and a thick current of electricity plunged into Lin Ming's Heavy Profound Soft Spear like a snake.

At such a close distance this was impossible to dodge. In an instant, that purple snake of thunder had sunk into Lin Ming's body.

Once one was struck by such a powerful electric current, they would be momentarily paralyzed. In a battle of masters, this momentary paralysis was fatal.

“Hehehehe...”

Zhou Xiaoling maliciously laughed. She raised her fist and punched out towards Lin Ming's right eye.

“Let me give you a panda eye!”

To curse someone and then beat up their face was a style consistent with Zhou Xiaoling. To give Lin Ming a panda eye was a very fun idea.

However, when her fist was halfway there, it was actually grabbed by another hand!

In that moment, Zhou Xiaoling felt like her hand was stuck in an iron clamp, even her bones were on the verge of breaking.

“Ah!”

Zhou Xiaoling screamed in pain, her beautiful eyes filled with horror and disbelief. How was this possible!? Lin Ming was struck by her purple thunder, so how come he wasn't affected!?

Zhou Xiaoling desperately let out a burst of thunder from her left hand, wanting to shake free from Lin Ming. But Lin Ming was simply unafraid of this electric shock. Whatever thunder surged into Lin Ming's body seemed to disappear without a trace.

Zhou Xiaoling clenched her teeth, waving her hand to try and loosen herself. However, Lin Ming's hand seemed to be cast from iron, immovable and unshakable; his hand gripped Zhou Xiaoling to the point where her bones nearly shattered.

Lin Ming's expression was cold, there was no fun or entertainment in his eyes. In that moment, he would have been fine if he was struck. But if another martial artist was punched in the eyes, there was a high chance they would go blind.

When a martial artist was paralyzed, their defensive power would be lowered by a great deal; how could a fragile eye withstand a fist that was flooded with true essence?

This little girl seemed simple at heart with an innocent and childish spirit. But this childish spirit was no reason to play with the lives of others. This little girl was spoiled too much by her master, what she needed was a good awakening lesson.

“Let go of me.”

Zhou Xiaoling angrily said. Her right hand gripped the golden ring, slicing towards Lin Ming’s arm.

However, Lin Ming only gripped Zhou Xiaoling’s arm and pulled.

After Tempering Marrow had reached 20%, his strength had already reached tens of thousands of jins – it was impossible for Zhou Xiaoling to compare with such a terrifying strength. In front of Lin Ming, Zhou Xiaoling was nothing more a chicken being held, she had no power to resist at all. With just a slight movement, Lin Ming pushed Zhou Xiaoling to block the sharp-edged ring with her own arm.

Zhou Xiaoling was shocked. She quickly stopped the attack.

In a battle between two young masters, it had actually devolved into a close combat melee. This sort of scene was extremely rare.

The audience stared with wide eyes, bewildered. In a normal battle between martial artists, it would usually be an exchange of martial skills, or a comparison of whose true essence was thicker, or whose moves were more vicious; how could there ever be a melee like this?

Zhou Xiaoling blushed. She had never felt so powerless in her life before. With her hand gripped, it felt like it was about to break,

there was just no way she could loosen herself. “You idiot, let go of me!”

Suddenly, her foot lashed out towards Lin Ming’s vital male weakness between his legs. But, this move was thankfully blocked by Lin Ming’s knees.

“So young and yet your actions are already so inhuman. This fist is for your neglectful parents!”

As Lin Ming spoke, he raised his fist, and directly punched Zhou Xiaoling’s stomach. His fist was imbued with vibrating true essence, and his entire hand was wrapped in an azure light. Zhou Xiaoling’s complexion changed. With her hand grabbed by Lin Ming, there was no way she could dodge this.

Bright Thunder Shield!

At this critical moment, a dazzling purple shield of thunder appeared around Zhou Xiaoling.

Kacha!

Vibrating true essence erupted, and the thunder shield shattered like glass. Lin Ming’s fist smashed into Zhou Xiaoling’s stomach!

“Ahh!”

Zhou Xiaoling felt like her stomach had been struck by a heavy iron hammer. She cried out in pain as she flew backwards, spitting out a mouthful of blood.

Chapter 363 – Special Body

Zhou Xiaoling smashed into the array formation barrier, then bounced to the ground, her entire appearance ruined and her face bloodied.

The audience was stunned, their mouths hanging wide. They didn't know what to say; how could such a fight happen? Grabbing an opponent's arm, confining their motions, and then viciously punching them?

“Did I see something wrong? Can you tell me what happened? I saw Lin Ming struck by Zhou Xiaoling's lightning, so how come nothing happened?” A disciple asked what everyone else was thinking.

Nobody could answer him, because this was already beyond their comprehension.

“He only used ten breaths of time to defeat Zhou Xiaoling, the difference between them is too great!”

“Not surprising. I don't know why, but Zhou Xiaoling's power of thunder is useless against Lin Ming. Zhou Xiaoling is a thunder-attribute martial artist, and using the power of thunder is her only means of attack. Once her power of thunder is sealed, there isn't anything she can do.”

The martial artists of the Thundercrest Sect had very ugly expressions. Immune to thunder? Then how could they defeat

such a person? Wouldn't they also be suppressed and lose? They could already tell how their battles with Lin Ming would go by looking at how Zhou Xiaoling ended up.

Because there weren't many thunder-attribute martial artists to begin with, and their own combat strength also had its superior facets, they had always had a deep sense of superiority. Now, someone had appeared that could completely ignore anything they did; they were simply unable to accept this.

Even the Thunderclap Zhou Lie asked Lei Jingtian with a sullen expression, "Senior Uncle Sect Master, how is this possible? Why is the boy immune to the power of thunder?"

Lei Jingtian frowned. He hesitated for a moment then slowly said, "He isn't immune to thunder, it's only that he's immune to Xiaoling's thunder. In other words, her cultivation is too low. If this boy faces someone much stronger than him, he would have no way to resist. I was carefully tracking Xiaoling's thunder a moment ago, and after it entered Lin Ming's body, it seemed to have been absorbed by him."

"Is that even possible?"

"The truth is already set before you. He should have some sort of special body. The world is large, there are far more wonders out there than we can ever imagine. For instance, Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun both have spiritual fire and spiritual ice bodies. A hundred years ago, there was even someone who appeared at our Thundercrest Sect that had an astral thunder body..." Lei Jingtian shook his head, looking regretful. This young genius had such a

special thunder type body but he wasn't obtained by his Thundercrest Sect – it was just too great a pity.

“Special body?” After Lei Jingtian spoke, a young man standing behind him raised his eyebrows, his eyes flashing with lightning as he locked onto Lin Ming. “Things are getting more and more interesting!”

“Limitless, don't look down on the opponent.” Lei Jingtian said with a true essence sound transmission.

“I'm not underestimating him.” The youth called Limitless was very pale. There was a faint mark between his eyes like it were a piece of ivory. “He truly has the qualifications to be my opponent. But, I'll have to wait until he reaches the Houtian realm...”

Onstage, Zhou Xiaoling bit her lips, her fingers touching the blood that leaked from her mouth. She stared at the bright crimson that stained her fingers, unable to believe what had happened. She was struck so hard that she had actually spit blood?

Ever since she was small, because she was such a talent, she had never been beaten by those old fogies of her sect before. Yet now she had received such a beating. That punch had been so solid and without even a single ounce of pity, even her internal organs seemed to have been severely injured.

For a time, resentment and grievance swelled up within her heart. Tears began to shine at the edges of her eyes.

Her talent was good, but her cultivation method was completely suppressed by Lin Ming. The power of thunder didn't work against him, and in a close quarters fight, she was like the little girl she was, unable to resist his attacks at all.

“You're a meanie, a bad meanie!” Zhou Xiaoling grit her teeth, a grinding sound coming out.

Lin Ming watched her with cold eyes. He noticed that the old man from the Thundercrest Sect had an ugly expression but didn't come out to defend her. It seemed that whatever doting master she had that had spoiled her to this point hadn't attended today's festivities.

“When you treat others so viciously, you should also expect that someone will treat you the same way another day. Do you want to have another go?” Lin Ming's tone was frosty.

Zhou Xiaoling's was enraged, her face flushing red. She knew that if she continued to fight with Lin Ming, there was no way she could win. But she still couldn't humiliate herself to admit defeat.

“Xiaoling! A loss is a loss, now get down from there!” From the Thundercrest Sect area, the Thunderclap Zhou Lie shouted. He was Zhou Xiaoling's big brother.

Zhou Xiaoling stamped her feet for a moment and then angrily stormed offstage.

Lin Ming sent a true essence sound transmission, “Don’t forget the agreement. You have to tell me who it is that is aiming at me.”

“I will ask!” Zhou Xiao clenched her jaws, hating everything that had happened.

The Five Element Region’s disciples suddenly began talking.

“Zhou Xiaoling was also defeated. Is this Lin Ming really 16 years old?”

“Zhou Xiaoling was suppressed too greatly. It’s impossible to see how deep Lin Ming’s strength is from this match. We must ask a non thunder-attribute martial artist to go up and test Lin Ming’s true strength. Jin Yue, how about you go up and give it a try?”

The youth called Jin Yue came from Golden Bell Mountain. When a martial artist became famous, they would often establish a family clan or a sect that was named after the weapon or cultivation method they used. For instance, the Seven Profound Valleys’ Zither Faction Founder had the surname Qin, meaning zither. As for the seven great sects of the Five Element Region, there were many martial artists that took their own attribute as their last name. For instance, the Sunfire Princess Huo Ruyan. Jin Yue was the same. He was a famous talent within Golden Bell Mountain, and in terms of reputation of strength, he was the strongest disciple under the Houtian realm.

“Why would I want to go up?” Jin Yue asked.

“Hehe, our Five Element Region’s seven sects are inexorably linked together. We’ll back you up, there’s no need to be afraid.”

“Are you trying to stir me up? How about you go up yourself? You’re not a thunder-attribute martial artist. Naturally, you’ll be able to test his true strength. How about it?” Jin Yue said, faintly smiling.

In the battle between Lin Ming and Zhou Xiaoling, it was truly impossible to see his true strength. But, Jin Yue could approximately guess that Lin Ming’s true strength was already comparably to an early Houtian realm core disciple!

Although Jin Yue was known as the strongest disciple underneath the Houtian realm, and was also a direct disciple, there was still a very large gap between him and a core disciple that had stepped into the Houtian realm. Going up and challenging Lin Ming was just looking for trouble. Jin Yue was not accustomed to being a stepping stone for other talents. Also, Lin Ming was only 16 years old – losing to such a young boy would be an unforgettable shame.

The martial artist that had been trying to stir up Jin Yue immediately shut up, unable to speak from embarrassment. His strength was inferior to Jin Yue’s. If he walked onstage knowing he would lose, then he would truly be a fool.

After Lin Ming’s and Zhou Xiaoling’s match, all of the disciples from the Five Element Region whose cultivations were below the Houtian realm had lost all interest in competing. Originally, they had been zealously trying to wipe out all the Pulse Condensation

disciples of Divine Phoenix Island, but now Lin Ming stood in front of them. He was like a towering mountain that loomed over them, it was impossible for them to cross this chasm.

Against Lin Ming, they didn't even have the courage to try and wear down his strength by repeatedly challenging him. Those whose cultivation was below the Houtian realm had already given up any hope of winning against him.

If they couldn't defeat Lin Ming, then there was no meaning to defeating any of the other Pulse Condensation period martial artists of Divine Phoenix Island.

The youth Ma Junhui who was defeated earlier by Lin Ming had a very pained expression. When he had fought with Lin Ming, he was already lucky that he wasn't disabled. Fortunately, Lin Ming's first spear had been a probing shot, and he had managed to escape with his body intact.

After Ma Junhui had lost, he had thought that he would seek out Lin Ming in the future and ruin him. But now that he looked back on his thoughts, he was terrified. If he tried to harm Lin Ming without understanding his true strength, the consequences of his actions would have been disastrous. This Lin Ming was simply not normal.

The Pulse Condensation period disciples no longer dared to step onstage, so now only Houtian realm disciples could step up. Suddenly, an eight foot tall youth jumped onstage. He growled, "Deep Earth Sect's Shi Hanshan, 19 years old. I wish to challenge the heroic elites of Divine Phoenix Island, please enlighten me!"

As Shi Hanshan spoke, the truth was that his eyes had been on Lin Ming, and he was also hoping to fight him. However, to challenge him would be a complete loss of face. For a Houtian realm martial artist to challenge a Pulse Condensation period martial artist was bad enough, but Lin Ming was also 3 years younger. This challenge simply couldn't be justified.

“Shi Hanshan is the second ranked core disciple of the Deep Earth Sect. These damn kids are really trying to bully us!” A Divine Phoenix Island disciple called out the injustice of the act.

“Since they cannot defeat the Pulse Condensation Lin Ming, now they want to compare Houtian talents. Our Divine Phoenix Island doesn't have too many Houtian elites, how should we deal with them?”

Within the sub-20 year old younger generation of Divine Phoenix Island, there were 10 direct disciples and around 30 core disciples.

Of the 10 direct disciples, seven were at the Houtian realm.

As for the 30-something core disciples, there were a total of eight that had reached the Houtian realm.

Altogether, this was 15 individuals.

A direct disciple wouldn't necessarily be stronger than a core disciple. This division of ranks only applied to talent, and didn't

consider strength.

Although there were some direct disciples with high talent, because of their age, their strength wasn't too amazing. For instance, Golden Bell Mountain's Jin Yue and the Thundercrest Sect's Zhou Xiaoling were like so.

The Five Element Region sects' situation was even worse than Divine Phoenix Island's. Every sect had around 10 Houtian elites, but with six sects added together, that was 60 individuals in total. They could simply pile up on the Divine Phoenix island disciples until they died.

To use many to bully the less, the Divine Phoenix Island disciples could only mutter their complaints.

Mu Zhaoxuan, the second ranked core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island, gave a cold snort and stood up, wanting to meet this fool head on. But, she was actually pulled down by the fourth ranked core disciple, Song Xiaoyue. "Senior-apprentice Sister Zhaoxuan, let me deal with this man. The more powerful individuals haven't moved yet, you must maintain your best condition to deal with them. Your battles will be much more important.

The battles of those heroic elite core disciples that were ranked first or second would naturally have a much greater significance than the battles of those behind them.

Mu Zhaoxuan nodded, "Junior-apprentice Sister Song, you need to be careful. The disciples of the Deep Earth Sect have an amazing

defensive power, they are very difficult to handle.”

“Mm, I know.” Song Xiaoyue said as she stepped onstage. She clearly said, “Divine Phoenix Island’s Song Xiaoyue, 19 years old. Please advise!”

Shi Hanshan stared at Song Xiaoyue with a salacious expression. He thought to himself that Divine Phoenix Island really had many beautiful women. Out of every 10 disciples, eight of them were women. Not only that, but all of them had exquisite looks. It was very different to the Deep Earth Sect, which was like a temple of monks. After staying within the boring Deep Earth Sect for four or five years, even if he saw someone grisly looking he would still find it pleasing to the eye. Thus, as Shi Hanshan’s vision fell upon Song Xiaoyue, his gaze inevitably lingered upon her face and chest for several breaths of time. One couldn’t blame Shi Hanshan for his blatant lust. After all, this was a completely normal bodily response for a man that had stayed in a temple of monks for so many years.

Song Xiaoyue’s complexion immediately went sour.

Chapter 364 – Trap

“You disgusting pig, watch where your eyes are going!” Song Xiaoyue said with a true essence sound transmission. Naturally, she could not say such harsh words out loud.

“Hehe, little lady, what’s wrong with someone looking at your body? Is it off limits? How are you going to stop me? If you were my wife then I’d let you manage me, but you’re not. Divine Phoenix Island has so many beautiful women, it’s such a shame that they are all wasted. How about you marry into our Deep Earth Sect?”

Shi Hanshan’s words caused Song Xiaoyue to explode into an apoplectic rage. Especially the ‘it’s such a shame that they are all wasted’. Just what did he take the female disciples of Divine Phoenix Island for?

“I’ll kill you!”

Song Xiaoyue gave a cold humph and then a longsword appeared in her hands. She thrust straight towards Shi Hanshan!

She immediately used the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, conjuring a shower of flames that looked like gorgeous fireworks, bombarding Shi Hanshan.

Boom boom boom!

Shi Hanshan created a thick brown wall to block all of Song Xiaoyue's attacks. This brown wall weathered Song Xiaoyue's barrage of attacks like a leaf swaying in a storm. Every time it seemed as if it would break, but it would always bounce back.

After 20 to 30 moves had passed, Song Xiaoyue hadn't been able to break through that defensive wall.

"What's the matter with Xiaoyue? She lost her presence of mind. The Deep Earth Sect disciples are famous for their defensive strength. What they wish for the most is for their opponent to crazily attack to consume their true essence. If Xiaoyue's like this, the most she can hope for is a tie." Mu Zhaoxuan anxiously said.

"Junior-apprentice Sister Song is strong, but she lacks combat experience. She has only competed in a few sect Martial Meetings or core disciple contests and assessments. This is the first time that she's fought with a disciple from another sect."

Against the Deep Earth Sect, when they created a shield, the best method to deal with this was to just completely ignore it. This sort of earth-attribute safety mask consumed true essence. If one ignored it, then he would naturally not continue. But if someone were to madly attack him, then this was what he would wish for the most.

Divine Phoenix Island's disciples worried. In such an intense fight, there was no way they could remind Song Xiaoyue about this with a true essence sound transmission.

After over 30 moves had passed, Song Xiaoyue also realized that something was wrong. She had nearly consumed half her true essence, and her opponent's true essence hadn't weakened in the least.

She couldn't help but slow down her offensive barrage. But at this time, Shi Hanshan slyly smiled and punched out, slamming straight towards Song Xiaoyue's face!

Song Xiaoyue clenched her shining teeth, cutting down on Shi Hanshan's fist with her sword!

Peng!

The grating sound of metal colliding rang in the air. Shi Hanshan had an earth-step treasure glove on his hand. Most of the disciples of the Deep Earth Sect were fist fighters.

As he blocked Song Xiaoyue's sword with his fist, he jabbed out at Song Xiaoyue's stomach with his other fist!

"Sky Splitting Strike!"

Shi Hanshan's exposed a fierce and barbarous smile. With a punch, the air around him seemed to stir up.

Song Xiaoyue had consumed too much true essence. She was unable to summon the necessary true essence, and was continually forced back by the fist's true essence.

As she retreated step by step, how could Shi Hanshan give Song Xiaoyue the chance to come back?

As they reached the front of the stage, the hard stone tiles under Shi Hanshan's feet that were reinforced by an array formation began to crackle.

“Stone King's Astral Sky Fist!”

Shi Hanshan's fist was like the wind, dozens of fist shades dancing in the air. The fist potential was like a roiling tide that swept out, completely dissipating all of the flaming true essence that gathered on Song Xiaoyue's sword.

“Fist Setting Universe!”

Shi Hanshan punched out one last time, the power of this first at the extreme, like landslide, like the shattering of a dam!

Puff!

Song Xiaoyue flew backwards, her face pale, her mouth spilling blood, and several of her ribs broken.

“Xiaoyue!”

“Senior-apprentice Sister!”

Several of the Divine Phoenix Island's female disciples gathered around her to help her up. "Xiaoyue are you alright?"

"I'm fine." Song Xiaoyue sat up with some difficulty. She bit her lips in shame and said, "I lost. I was too stupid, I've brought disgrace to everyone."

Song Xiaoyue understood that Shi Hanshan was using words to provoke her, but his stupid and simple expression had caused her to relax her guard. In the end, this could only be faulted on Song Xiaoyue having grown up as a child in Divine Phoenix Island and lacking the necessary real world combat experience. Otherwise, there was no way she would have been stirred up by just a few words and lost in such a manner.

If she could have fought slowly and steadily, then she could at least have obtained a draw. Song Xiaoyue felt apologetic towards everyone that was counting on her. She had requested to go up on her own initiative, and in the end had lost in such a horrible fashion.

Mu Zhaoxuan looked over Song Xiaoyue's injuries. She had several broken ribs, but to a martial artist, they would be quickly healed with a few pills and some rest. But, it was no longer possible for Song Xiaoyue to continue participating in this competition.

Now, of the 15 Houtian juniors of Divine Phoenix Island, Song Xiaoyue had lost her combat strength, and the fifth listed core disciple Hua Hong had consumed too much of her strength in her

battle against Zhang Lin, and would be unable to fight in a short period of time. There were only 13 individuals left over with the ability to fight. But, of the six opposing great sects, the first ranked core disciples still hadn't even taken action, nor had their direct disciples.

Once several more rounds passed, there might not be anyone left in Divine Phoenix Island that could still fight.

Mu Dingshan had a very troubled expression. He could only watch helplessly as his core disciple juniors fell into such a troubling position. Yet, he was unable to do anything about it.

At these sort of banquet competitions, there was an established and unspoken rule that those entering the stage would do so in order of weakest to strongest. First, the weakest disciples would come onstage, and then the middle core disciples, the upper-middle core disciples, the top core disciples, the direct disciples, and finally the chief disciple would step on stage.

In terms of cultivation, it would be those at the Pulse Condensation period first, then those at the Houtian realm. This event would usually last the entire day, and the true masters would exchange blows last. Otherwise, there would be no opportunity for the common disciples to step onstage.

If Mu Dingshan stepped onstage at this moment, it would ruin this rule. Not only that, but then the Sunfire Princess, Zhang Yunjian, and other similar characters would step on stage. He and Mu Xiaoqing would be two against six; this pressure would be no less than what the core disciples were feeling.

When that time came, they would also fall into the position of not being able to sit down, and having to give arguments like a loss is a loss.

“These Five Element Region fellows really don’t care about face.” Mu Dingshan said with a dour expression.

“Mm. In usual years during these kinds of competitions, there would not be such obvious targeting. The Five Element Region’s seven great sects would challenge each other, and also the South Horizon Region would have Supreme Mystery Temple and Dire Space Sect participating to share the pressure. Every time, our Divine Phoenix Island would be able to shine. But now because of the South Sea Demon Region, everyone is competing against us and going all out each time. The various measures are endless.” The one who answered was Tianguang Revered Master. Now that his 400th birthday celebration had devolved to this point, he could only ruefully smile.

As the two spoke, more people stepped on stage. They were top ranking core disciples from Divine Phoenix Island and Arctic Ice Palace. Fire and ice collided together, and the defensive barrier trembled. After several moves, their strength was about the same. The Five Element Region’s seven great sects had contested with Divine Phoenix Island for a long time, and they each had an approximate understanding of the other’s strength. When two opponents went onstage, their strength would be about the same.

As the two battled for an incense stick of time, both of them were wounded, but they still continued, the match undecided.

“There’s no more meaning to continue fighting, call this a draw!”

An Arctic Ice Palace elder said.

The two disciples were already severely wounded. If this continued, it would become a life and death struggle.

The Divine Phoenix Island disciple stepped down with extreme unwillingness. At this time, the Deep Earth Sect’s Shi Hanshan unexpectedly jumped onstage. The nearly nine foot tall Shi Hanshan stood on the center of the stage, looking no different to an iron tower. He said, “Deep Earth Sect’s Shi Hanshan, I wish to challenge the young heroic elites of Divine Phoenix Island!”

“This bastard, he actually jumped out again!”

According to the unwritten rules of the banquet competition, one could continue fighting if they won, without limit. But if they lost, they could only obediently sit in the audience. Only if others challenged them would they be able to go up. Otherwise, they wouldn’t have the qualifications to step onstage and challenge others. Since Shi Hanshan won, he naturally had the qualifications to fight again.

Shi Hanshan was very excited. This sort of opportunity for the Five Element Region to battle the South Horizon Region was very rare. If he achieved better results, not only would he become more famous and gain more honor, but he would be given additional attention by the sect, and would even have rewards after returning

home.

After exhausting Song Xiaoyue and then defeating her, he actually hadn't consumed much true essence. He had used the time after the match to take some restorative pills and meditate for an incense stick of time, restoring his condition to near perfection.

The reason he stepped onstage was to continue challenging.

"I wonder which heroic elite of Divine Phoenix Island could advise me?"

Shi Hanshan's voice was like thunder to the ears. Song Xiaoyue grit her teeth, glaring with utter resentment at this duplicitous pig, wishing she could savagely beat him up. The third, fourth, and fifth ranked core disciples of Divine Phoenix Island had already stepped onstage. Now, only the first and second ranked core disciples were left. If they went up to deal with Shi Hanshan, later there would be no one else to deal with the top ranked core disciples of the other sects.

Hua Hong clenched her teeth, preparing to go onstage and meet this pig's challenge. She had won her match, and thus also had the qualifications to fight again. Although she had consumed a great deal of energy, she had been able to restore the greater portion of it in this last half hour.

"Junior-apprentice Sister Hua, don't be so rash. This Shi Hanshan is a bad match for you. You haven't recovered to your top condition yet. Wait for a few more matches and then restore your

best condition before going onstage again, otherwise you'll only let the villain become increasingly arrogant."

As Mu Zhaoxuan pulled back Hua Hong, she glanced at all the other Houtian core disciples. Besides her and the top ranked core disciple Mu Dianqing, there was no one else that had the capabilities to step on stage. The only ones left over were the direct disciples, who couldn't act yet.

It seemed that the only path left was for her to step onstage. Mu Zhaoxuan stood up, but at this time, a true essence sound transmission resounded in her ears. "Senior-apprentice Sister, allow me to go up."

Mu Zhaoxuan turned around, astonishment in her eyes. She saw Lin Ming stand up.

"Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, you will challenge a Houtian realm master?" Mu Zhaoxuan was stunned.

"Yes."

Lin Ming hadn't stepped onstage, and had instead observed the first two fights so he could get a grasp of the strength of a fourth-grade sect's Houtian genius. He had a plan from the start.

He concluded that a top ranked core disciple of a fourth-grade sect like Shi Hanshan or Song Xiaoyue had a strength similar to Huang Zixuan, who had had killed three months ago.

Although Huang Zixuan was a poor talent, he was still a peak Houtian master that came from a small sect. These fourth-grade sect core disciples could compare to a peak Houtian master at the early Houtian realm. When they reached the peak Houtian realm, they might even be able to compare with a Xiantian master.

This strength was also aligned with Lin Ming's expectations.

Shi Hanshan saw Lin Ming stand up. He was surprised, and that surprise quickly turned to excitement. He raised his sleeves, rubbing his nose, and smiled as he said, "Hehe, how interesting. Come. I've already wanted to challenge you."

Chapter 365 – I'll Take All Comers

Shi Hanshan wanted to have a match against Lin Ming. However, because their difference in cultivation was too great, he had no way to challenge him.

He didn't think that Lin Ming would actually offer himself up.

Shi Hanshan didn't look down on Lin Ming. Rather, it was because of Lin Ming's overabundance of talent that he had aimed for him. He believed that with Lin Ming's talent, he would become a lofty character in the future, a powerhouse on the level of Zhan Yunjian. But now, his current ability was far too weak.

Shi Hanshan realized that he wouldn't be a match for Lin Ming in a few years. So while Lin Ming was still small and weak, he would take this opportunity to savagely crush him underneath his boot. To crush a monstrous genius beneath one's boot was a very rewarding experience.

Thinking this, the smile on Shi Hanshan's face became increasingly wide. He was originally a sorry and foul looking figure, but now with such a bright smiling face, it really caused one's skin to crawl.

"Lin Ming, don't be so impulsive. Are you sure? If you aren't then let me go on first. You've already taken the title of number one amongst the Pulse Condensation period. Even if you don't fight anymore, no one will say anything about you. If you lose, you'll also lose all the honor that you've gained." Mu Zhaoxuan

nervously said.

Lin Ming nodded, his words honest, “I have complete confidence.”

Complete confidence?

Mu Zhaoxuan was shocked. She already thought it would be extraordinary if Lin Ming had a 60 or 70% assurance to win. That would leave some room for doubt. But she didn't expect that Lin Ming would directly say that he had full confidence he would emerge victorious!

If he said this with such belief, then how could she possibly reject him?

Lin Ming had just stepped onstage when Mu Qianyu's true essence sound transmission resounded in his ears, “Lin Ming, you won't have a problem this match, right?”

“No problem at all.” Lin Ming turned around and was surprised to see Mu Qianyu looking at him with a fond smile in her eyes. This startled Lin Ming, was there something to be so happy about?

“Mm. I guess that since you walk on stage so decisively, you won't have a problem.” After Lin Ming continuously defeated Ma Junhui and Zhou Xiaoling, Mu Qianyu suddenly remembered that Lin Ming himself was a monstrous talent of preposterous proportions, and that all her worries had been in vain. At

Thundercrash Mountain, he had even absorbed a low-grade earth-step Thunder Soul, so what other matter could be impossible to him? She smiled as she said, “Lin Ming, Honorable Master bids me to tell you that if you can defeat Shi Hanshan, she’ll have a reward for you.”

“Oh?” Lin Ming was immediately happy. This was a great fortune! A reward that a top fourth-grade sect would give out would naturally be some fantastic treasure.

“What sort of reward?” Lin Ming asked with gusto, his spirit stirred up.

“Haha, you really wake up without some rewards, hm? How about you take a guess?” Mu Qianyu said, keeping Lin Ming in suspense. Lin Ming paused – whatever could have Mu Qianyu keep him in suspense would truly be a wonderful treasure.

What could it be?

Heaven Opening Pills?

Medium-grade, or even high-grade true essence stones?

Although these objects were valuable, they were still relatively popular and common, and were equivalent to money. They shouldn’t be able to enter Mu Qianyu’s eyes.

Maybe it was some miracle medicine like the Shattered Demon

Heart Crystal that could help a Xiantian master reach the Revolving Core realm?

That was impossible. Old lady Yuhuang had no idea that he was hiding away his Tempering Marrow realm. And the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was no different from the purest poison to a Pulse Condensation period martial artist. Old lady Yuhuang would not reward him with something unreasonable that wouldn't help him at this stage.

“Is it some valuable material that can help increase one's strength?” Lin Ming casually guessed.

“That sort of thing is useless to you. You already have enough Heaven Opening Pills, so you're probably tired of eating them. And if you eat too many, you'll build up too much pill toxin. What Honorable Master promised to reward you is the blood of the Vermillion Bird, this is the transplantation of a Saint Beast's bloodline!

Transplanting a Saint Beast's bloodline? When Lin Ming had first heard about the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle', he had also heard Mu Qianyu mention that the Vermillion Bird bloodline could be transplanted onto another person.

In order to cultivate the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' and the 'Blue Lian Abstract Phantom Code' to their core realm, one had to have the bloodline of the Vermillion Bird or Blue Luan. Otherwise, it was impossible to cultivate.

In Divine Phoenix Island, there were very few individuals that were truly born with the Vermillion Bird Bloodline. Most of the disciples that had this bloodline had it transplanted within them during the Houtian realm. This so-called ‘transplant’ was in fact taking the blood of the Vermillion Bird Saint Beast and sealing it into one’s body using a secret technique, forcing the Vermillion Bird blood to penetrate into one’s bone marrow and fuse with their own bloodline.

This sort of bloodline transplant was very modest. It could only increase a disciple’s fire-attribute true essence fusion compatibility and ability to cultivate the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ by a small amount. Its effects were very limited.

Let alone expecting this bloodline transplant to allow one to cultivate the core sections of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ and ‘Blue Lian Abstract Phantom Code’.

But for Mu Qianyu to emphasize this reward so much, this would definitely not be the usual Saint Beast bloodline transplantation.

Lin Ming couldn’t help but ask, “Miss Mu shouldn’t be speaking of the same bloodline that the inner court disciples have, right?”

“Of course not.” Mu Qianyu snapped back. “You really are too greedy, you can’t lose a bit at all. It is the Vermillion Bird’s blood essence transplant. Honored Master has said that the more geniuses you defeat, and the stronger they are, the richer the bloodline that will be bestowed to you. Honorable Master has the capital, and this is an extremely rare opportunity.”

Mu Qianyu laughed as she spoke. Because Lin Ming could have such a grand opportunity, her mood was also very good.

Lin Ming was jubilant, this was actually the Vermillion Bird's blood essence transplant! Blood essence and blood were to completely different concepts. Whether it was a Saint Beast or martial artist, losing a bit of blood wasn't anything at all. They could easily recover it in several days. But if one lost blood essence, that would harm their very foundation.

Once one's blood essence was drained, that was equal to one's life being damaged, and also losing cultivation. If a martial artist lost their blood essence, that was an absolute death sentence.

Even Lin Ming didn't dare to risk his own blood essence. The power of his blood vitality used his blood essence as its base.

For a Vermillion Bird to leave behind blood essence, there were only two possibilities. The Vermillion Bird had either been killed, or had died a natural death.

Ultimately, a Vermillion Bird was a Saint Beast. It was not an endless and immortal being like a phoenix. Its so-called bathing in the fires of nirvana was really only used to treat wounds. Even the most grievous of wounds could be treated by undergoing the fires of nirvana. But, undergoing nirvana would not actually lengthen a Vermillion Bird's lifespan.

At the end of a Vermillion Bird's life, they would complete their

final nirvana, and also die in nirvana.

After a Vermillion Bird died, they would leave behind a small cup of blood essence.

If Lin Ming could obtain enough Vermillion Bird blood essence and transplant it within himself, his bloodline might not be as pure as that of Mu Qianyu or Mu Bingyun, but it was more than enough to cultivate the core section of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’!

This was too important to Lin Ming’s future cultivation of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’.

Prior to this, the reason that Lin Ming had joined Divine Phoenix Island, besides Mu Qianyu, was that he had joint interests with Divine Phoenix Island. Divine Phoenix Island valued Lin Ming’s talent, but Lin Ming also needed the resources that Divine Phoenix Island could provide. In the future, if Lin Ming could reach the Revolving Core realm, he would in turn be able to help lead Divine Phoenix Island to a stronger position, and even help assist them in becoming a fifth-grade sect.

Lin Ming didn’t think that he was taking advantage of Divine Phoenix Island in any way – that was why he didn’t even prostrate himself in front of old lady Yuhuang.

But now, after Lin Ming heard Mu Qianyu mention the Vermillion Bird blood essence, even he found it difficult to keep his beating heart calm. This was Vermillion Bird blood essence! It was

an enormous benefit to any Divine Phoenix Island disciple. From the founding of Divine Phoenix Island until now, just how many Vermillion Birds had died? How much Vermillion Bird blood essence could there possibly be? By comparison, after generation after generation of Divine Phoenix Island disciples coming and going, who knew who how many individuals there were.

Since Vermillion Bird blood essence could be preserved this far, it must be precious to the point that even old lady Yuhuang was reluctant to use it. Yet she had taken out something so treasured and was even rewarding it to him. This act of kindness was enough to engrave itself upon Lin Ming's mind.

But even though old lady Yuhuang had taken out the blood essence as a reward, the ultimate goal was a joining of mutual interests. Lin Ming also firmed his resolve. In his life, he would help Divine Phoenix Island become a fifth-grade sect. Once he became a Revolving Core Supreme Elder, this shouldn't be too difficult for him.

Lin Ming couldn't help but glance at old lady Yuhuang. He was surprised to find that she was still sitting in her chair, her expression reticent and cloudy.

Seeing Lin Ming look at her, old lady Yuhuang sent him a true essence sound transmission, "Boy, don't be happy so early. If you lose then you won't get anything. At that time, don't come crying to me."

Lin Ming grinned, "Hey, I can win!"

“Humph, I believe you can defeat Shi Hanshan. But once you win, there will be even more Houtian masters challenging you. Do you think you can defeat the dozens of Houtian masters from the six great sects?”

As old lady Yuhuang spoke, a wave of heroic pride and dignity flooded through Lin Ming. He took a deep breath, calmly saying, “Whoever comes will come. I’ll take all comers!”

Old lady Yuhuang was shocked. This boy was really too arrogant. But, the young should be a bit arrogant, and they should also have an indomitable and cavalier attitude with absolute belief in their own abilities. Only then would they be able to bring out their true potential!

“Good. Then let this old woman have a look at just how many you can take!” Old lady Yuhuang was also looking forward to seeing just how far Lin Ming could go.

Old lady Yuhuang had just finished speaking when another voice sounded in Lin Ming’s ear, “Brother Lin, are we going to do this or what?”

Lin Ming turned to see Shi Hanshan grinning at him. He looked like a simple and honest man, but the truth was that it was only a veneer that hid his cunning edge.

Lin Ming discovered that he had been speaking with Mu Qianyu and old lady Yuhuang too long, and was just standing at the edge of

the stage, not even having entered yet.

Shi Hanshan naturally assumed that Lin Ming was afraid.

Because he had impulsively stood up, he had walked halfway but suddenly regretted it. With Lin Ming's age and cultivation, if he decided to change his direction midway, although it was shameful it was also an understandable action.

This was not what Shi Hanshan was hoping to see.

He cupped his hands across his chest and said, "Brother Lin, you're very strong. Perhaps within the entire Five Element Region, there is no junior in the Pulse Condensation period that can defeat you. Even Thundercrest Sect's Junior-apprentice Sister Zhou is not your match at all. Although I am at the Houtian realm, my talent is much worse than yours. Against a 'Lesser Saint' talent like yourself, I'm not any better. However, Brother Lin is still young. If Brother Lin doesn't wish to fight, then I naturally will not force the issue. It's just that I will find it truly regrettable that I won't be able to experience the top sub-Houtian master of the South Horizon Region."

Shi Hanshan's words seemed to be filled with yearning emotion, but that 'Lesser Saint' title was intended to deliberately belittle themselves and raise Lin Ming's proud nature. This truth was that this was another method of provoking that was completely different from the demeaning kind of the idiotic Ma Junhui. Perhaps this method of prodding was even more effective.

Chapter 366 – The Same Trick

Shi Hanshan spoke to everyone else so that when he dealt with Lin Ming, it wouldn't be the strong bullying the weak. With Lin Ming's strength that could even suppress Zhou Xiaoling, he was able to challenge a Houtian master, so he should be able to fight. Shi Hanshan had placed himself in the same position as Lin Ming, so if he won it would also be a satisfying win.

As Shi Hanshan's voice fell, the Five Element Region's disciples began to engage in a heated discussion as to what the result of the battle would be.

“Lin Ming should have the ability to challenge a Houtian master, but going against against Shi Hanshan is a bit too much. He should have started with a weaker opponent.”

“This Shi Hanshan's defense is like a turtle shell. If Lin Ming's attacks aren't able to break Shi Hanshan's defense, there will be nothing he can do, and he'll eventually lose.”

“Not quite. Lin Ming has the advantage in speed, it's not to be trifled with. Even if he can't defeat Shi Hanshan, he still has a way to not lose.”

“Humph! According to your idea it's just a way to escape; at most it will be a tie.”

In the Thundercrest Sect section of the banquet, Zhou Lie was sipping a cup of tea. He watched as his sister had a very resentful

expression plastered on her face. He couldn't help but smile and ask, "Xiaoling, who do you think will win?"

Zhou Xiaoling curled her lips in disgust, saying, "That big stupid one is going to lose in a big stupid way."

"Oh? You're sure that Lin Ming can win? How do you know?" Zhou Lie was a bit surprised. He didn't think that Xiaoling would assume Lin Ming would win so easily. Since Lin Ming's body was immune to thunder, it was hard to tell just where the limits of his true strength were.

"I just know." Zhou Xiaoling pouted, not bothering to explain anymore.

In comparison to the disciples of the Five Element Region, the Divine Phoenix Island disciples were mostly worried, not interested in discussing the outcome of the match. Since things had come to this point, there were already many people who were jealous of Lin Ming and were hoping to see him beaten to a pulp. Divine Phoenix Island was already pushed to the end of the line by the collaboration of these sects. Lin Ming was the last one standing who could possibly earn some face back for them. If Lin Ming lost here, then Divine Phoenix Island might suffer a complete meltdown.

Onstage, Lin Ming and Shi Hanshan stood 100 feet apart.

Shi Hanshan was quite happy. Lin Ming had come up and had finally accepted this match. He was looking forward to defeating

Lin Ming and seeing just what miserable expression would appear on his face.

“Lin Ming.” Shi Hanshan called out with his true essence sound transmission, “Do you know why I was hoping to fight you so much?”

Lin Ming was silent, waiting for Shi Hanshan to finish his monologue.

“Hehe, the truth is very simple. Your talent is just too amazing, people can’t help but want to step back from your radiance. Back when I wasn’t a disciple of the Deep Earth Sect, I was only a poor kid in a big town. My city had a daughter from a wealthy family, whose looks were enough to cause the fall of nations. Looks, temperament, elegance, she had everything I ever wished for. And then, I had an idea! I thought that no matter how perfect she was, or how many men she had entranced as their one true love, I would make her nothing but a slut that waited upon this father’s crotch. Afterwards, I came back and took her maidenhead. That taste, even if I think about it now, is just to die for! Afterwards, that girl married a noble that matched well with her. Every time I think about how such a noble woman was once pressed under this father’s body, I truly find it perfect.

“Now, you are the same as that woman. No matter how great you are in the future, you will have been defeated by my hands. You will be just like that slut that was ridden by me.”

Shi Hanshan was very happy, saying all of this with a proud and assertive expression. Lin Ming listened, and then suddenly smiled.

“You speak so much nonsense. Are you trying to use that same old trick again and provoke me into a fury so that I’ll attack your shield with my full force? Are you such a loser with no confidence in defeating me that you have to use such an underhanded method?”

After listening to Lin Ming’s words, Shi Hanshan’s expression slightly changed.

This boy!

“Surname Lin, let alone me, even you aren’t completely confident. I am confident but I still use this trick to stir you up. But if you are so confident, do you dare to attack me?”

Lin Ming took out the Heavy Profound Soft Spear from his spatial ring, grinning as he did so. “As you wish!”

With that last word, Lin Ming’s entire aura suddenly exploded. The Heavy Profound Soft Spear flashed with a purple light, and the air surrounding him began to violently churn, creating a vortex of wind.

“Against scum like you, I love beating them up!”

Lin Ming’s feet trod the ground and he shot forwards like an arrow. Spear wind howled, and the Heavy Profound Soft Spear was layered with an azure light. This spear was enveloped by the energy of the True Dragon!

“This is bad! It looks like Lin Ming was tricked!” Mu Zhaoxuan saw that Lin Ming and Shi Hanshan had stood across from each other for several breaths of time and felt that something was wrong. It looked like Shi Hanshan was using the same old trick again, and was angering Lin Ming with a true essence sound transmission.

Just a quarter of an hour ago, Song Xiaoyue had also fallen for this trick. Mu Zhaoxuan thought that Lin Ming was a bit younger and had a slightly less immature disposition, so he wouldn't fall for the same trap that Song Xiaoyue had fallen into. But now looking at Lin Ming's all out attack, he was most likely stirred into a fury by Shi Hanshan's words!

Mu Zhaoxuan could already foresee Lin Ming repeated the same mistakes and finally being defeated. She couldn't help but feel a thick surge of despair in her heart.

“The nature of the young is just too impulsive.”

“Lin Ming will lose, I have no idea what he was thinking.”

Before this battle, the disciples from the Five Element Region had favored Lin Ming by a small margin. But now, they had all changed their judgement.

Zhan Yunjian also shook his head. He had been favoring Lin Ming to win, but a cool-headed martial artist should not be swayed by their emotions, not to mention that Shi Hanshan's method of

provocation was so clumsy.

Shi Hanshan's lips curved up in a sneer. He didn't think that there would be such an idiot. Lin Ming knew his idea perfectly well but still decided to rush him like this. This simpleton was simply swayed by his personal feelings too much. No matter how talented he was, it was impossible for him to remain a genius. He would die halfway!

“Earth Essence Shield!”

With both hands propping up a shield, a thick brown defensive barrier immediately flashed into existence. Shi Hanshan was far too familiar with this. No matter what attack was used, no matter what storm hit, he would steadfastly defend against them all!

He had once gone into a mystic realm with other martial artists. When they had encountered a disaster, the ones to survive were martial artists from the Deep Earth Sect. Shi Hanshan had full confidence in his defense.

However, when that Heavy Profound Soft Spear that was wrapped in an azure light smashed down, Shi Hanshan's complexion changed. He felt that it wasn't a spear that struck him, but a collapsing mountain!

Bang!!!

The Heavy Profound Soft Spear smashed into the Earth Essence

Shield. Shi Hanshan felt both of his arms tremble, and he completely lost feeling below the elbows. A terrifying pressure passed down his arms into his legs, blowing up the tiles under his feet!

What... what kind of strange power was this?

Shi Hanshan felt an inexplicable horror rise in his heart. He had inborn divine strength and also practiced specialized horse stance techniques during the Body Transformation Stage. Yet, this attack almost made him fall to the ground.

“Oh? You withstood it?”

Lin Ming was a bit surprised. He had used the strength of Tempering Marrow a while ago, and struck down with a body strength of tens of thousands of jins. The azure true essence was only used to protect the Heavy Profound Soft Spear; a medium-grade human-step treasure wouldn't able to withstand such a collision.

This Shi Hanshan really did have the ability to back up his proud heart.

Lin Ming's lips curved up in a grin. He lifted his spear and smashed down again on the turtle shell-like Earth Essence Shield. This strike was even more dangerous than the last.

Power of thunder!

Within the Heretical God Seed, the silent Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder suddenly erupted. The Heavy Profound Soft Spear shined with a purple light, carrying the prestige of rolling thunder!

Bang!

A spear smashed into the Earth Essence Shield. Shi Hanshan's five organs were shaken, and his blood roiled. Under that terrifying strength, a faint power of thunder had penetrated through the Earth Essence Shield. It was like a venomous serpent that drilled into Shi Hanshan's body, causing his entire body to go numb.

“Damn!”

Shi Hanshan clenched his teeth and galvanized all of the true essence in his body to the limit, thickening the Earth Essence Shield.

The third spear – Flow like Silk!

The Heavy Profound Soft Spear's azure true essence began to vibrate, sending humming sounds in the air. The azure-wrapped Heavy Profound Soft Spear howled like a silver dragon going to sea!

The Heavy Profound Soft Spear smashed into the Earth Essence Shield. In that instant, a power of vibration pierced through the

shield, spreading into Shi Hanshan's body. Shi Hanshan only felt like his entire body was coming apart, all of his organs trembling!

Fourth spear!

Fifth spear!

Lin Ming's attacks were like a storm. Shi Hanshan's true essence shield bent under this vicious barrage of attacks, but didn't actually break. This was the defensive shield technique of the Deep Earth Sect, and was maintained by the caster's true essence. As long as true essence was supplied, it wouldn't break.

The reason that Shi Hanshan had been able to keep the shield from breaking was because he was crazily overdrawing the true essence from his body, injuring himself. Not only that, but while maintaining the shield, he also had to withstand the dual attacks from the power of thunder and Flow like Silk.

This situation could be described as beyond miserable.

However, because of the Earth Essence Shield and the flashing purple light, most disciples only saw a brilliant and gorgeous collision of true essence. They didn't realize just what situation Shi Hanshan was in.

Song Xiaoyue and Mu Zhaoxuan were extremely anxious. Yan Fuhong was filled with anticipation as he saw Lin Ming on the brink of defeat. As for the disciples of the Five Element Region,

they talked about the match, comparing their insight of the battle and understandings of cultivation methods.

“Lin Ming is too naïve. In a situation where their strength is about the same, breaking through the Deep Earth Sect’s Earth Essence Shield will require several times more true essence than the Deep Earth Sect disciple will use. It looks like no matter how fiercely Shi Hanshan’s Earth Essence Shield is deforming, it is impossible to break.”

“Mm. The Deep Earth Sect’s Earth Essence Shield can be strong when you want it strong, and weak when you want it weak. There is simply no waste of true essence in using it. When Song Xiaoyue attacked, the Earth Essence Shield had also fiercely distorted. After some thought, it seems that the only reason was because Shi Hanshan wanted to save his strength.”

“Haha, Brother Jin’s experience is too extensive and broad. According to my knowledge, the Deep Earth Sect has many different kinds of defensive shields. As for the Earth Essence Shield, that’s quite an uncommon one. I’m surprised that Brother Jin has such a thorough understanding.”

“It’s nothing. I just happened to battle a Deep Earth Sect disciple who used the Earth Essence Shield once. Lin Ming is talented, but he is just too impulsive. With such a disposition, it’s very difficult to become a true master. Unless, maybe after he grows up—”

As Brother Jin was speaking, he was immediately interrupted.
“Brother Jin...”

“What?” The surnamed Jin asked, a bit annoyed.

“I think I saw that Shi Hanshan in the Earth Essence Shield cough blood... it seems like his entire body is covered in blood...” A 15 or 16 year old youth hesitantly said as he stared with wide eyes.

Chapter 367 – Saint Rank Talent

“What did you just say? He’s coughing blood?”

The youth surnamed Jin couldn’t believe this as he looked towards the center of the stage. He just happened to see the moment that Lin Ming withdrew his spear, and the brilliant purple light dimmed. The Earth Essence Shield also lightened, and there was a short moment where he could see Shi Hanshan’s bleak and miserable appearance as he struggled to maintain the Earth Essence Shield.

His hair was disheveled, his face wan, his nose bleeding, and he was coughing blood. Even his clothes were stained crimson.

The youth surnamed Jin was stunned, his mouth hanging open. As he witnessed Shi Hanshan’s incredibly tragic situation, he was aghast.

Shi Hanshan could be described as pathetic beyond belief. He was long on the edge of collapsing, but if he didn’t stubbornly harm himself to maintain the shield, once the Earth Essence Shield broke, his situation would be even worse!

As Shi Hanshan saw Lin Ming gather his strength to stab out with his spear again, he felt his heart shiver. What he encountered on this stage wasn’t a man, but a vicious beast in human form. Not only that, but this vicious beast was above the fifth-level!

Because he was concerned about face, he grit his teeth and

refused to admit defeat. He was hoping that Lin Ming wouldn't be able to continue such a barrage of high intensity attacks. After all, he was in a defensive position, and in an extended battle he would be the one with an advantage. Not only that, but the Deep Earth Sect's Earth Essence Shield was able to save a significant amount of true essence. Lin Ming's true essence consumption surely had to be several times his own.

But after withstanding four or five more spear strikes, Shi Hanshan was on the verge of breaking. He could not suppress the roiling blood in his chest much longer, and he felt like he was about to vomit out his organs. On the other hand, Lin Ming looked completely unconcerned, as if he were just standing there watching him. Spear after spear after spear! Each spear was faster and more ruthless than the last!

He wanted to shout out and admit defeat, but Lin Ming's spear attacks were too quick. Before he had the chance to call out, another spear attack had already arrived!

But, this spear caused Shi Hanshan's face to go white, his mind trembling. He wouldn't be able to block this!

“Stop!”

An old man from the Deep Earth Sect wearing a loose yellow robe stood up. But at the same time, Lin Ming's Heavy Profound Soft Spear had already smashed down.

Bang!

Dazzling thunder sparked, and blue light flashed. Shi Hanshan's Earth Essence Shield was finally at its limit, and it was no different than an egg struck by a hammer – it exploded into pieces!

Shi Hanshan felt like he was struck by a mountain as he flew backwards, his clothes torn to shreds, a sweet, coppery taste in his throat as he spat out a mouthful of blood. He didn't know how many bones he had broken, but he was tossed back like a broken doll.

Before Shi Hanshan hit the barrier array, the yellow-robed old man appeared behind him, casually ripping open the barrier and taking Shi Hanshan in his hands, gently falling onto the stage.

The entire audience was silent. The youth surnamed Jin was stunned silly. Shi Hanshan's Earth Essence Shield had actually been... broken? Not only that, but his opponent had been a Pulse Condensation period martial artist?

Most people at the banquet hadn't even noticed that Shi Hanshan had been coughing blood. They had been casually looking at the action on stage, comparing their knowledge of the martial arts match. They thought that Lin Ming wouldn't be able to persist, but after that sudden explosion, the Earth Essence Shield had shattered, and Shi Hanshan had flown backwards. Such a quick reversal was completely unexpected!

Mu Zhaoxuan, Mu Dianping, Hua Hong, and all the other Divine Phoenix Island core disciples that had been worrying about Lin

Ming felt like they were in a dream. Lin Ming won, but he also did so in such a fierce manner.

Zhan Yunjian sucked in a breath of cold. He casually glanced at Zhou Lie and saw that his expression was like the surface of a calm lake. “This fellow Lin Ming is too terrifying. He hasn’t even grown up but he can already defeat Houtian core disciples! Not just that, but with plenty of strength left over!”

“Such a fearful talent... once he reaches the Houtian realm...” Zhang Yunjian didn’t dare to think about what would happen. Three words echoed in his mind, causing his heart to tremble...

Saint rank talent!!!

As long as another year or two passed, Lin Ming would step into the Houtian realm and become a Saint rank talent! He would be a Saint rank talent that was in no way inferior to Mu Qianyu from ten years ago!

How was this possible? He had heard that this Lin Ming had been found from a small third-grade sect. A person that Divine Phoenix Island had dug out from some small third-grade sect actually had such terrifying talent!

Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun. These twin sister Saint rank talents were already enough to cause the seven great sects of the Five Element Region to be extremely jealous. Once Lin Ming was added...

Zhang Yunjian was unable to think of the future. In just a mere ten years, three Saint rank talents had appeared!

He had a foreboding feeling that as long as Divine Phoenix Island would be able to endure this disaster from the South Sea Demon Region, they would have a high possibility of becoming a phoenix that underwent nirvana, being reborn into a true fifth-grade sect!

At this moment, it wasn't just Zhan Yunjian, but also many others that felt this. Lin Ming's talent was already enough to be considered at the Saint level. It was just that he was too young, thus he was too weak at the moment. Stepping into the true Saint rank was just a matter of time. He probably didn't even need two years – one year would be enough.

The Sunfire Princess' beautiful eyes stared at Lin Ming, unblinking.

Tianguang Revered Elder stroked his beard as he laughed.

All of the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island gazed at Lin Ming with a mixture of disbelief, awe, and worship in their eyes.

Even the indifferent Mu Bingyun was colored with surprise as she gazed at Lin Ming. This young boy that her elder sister had found had far surpassed any of her expectations.

The yellow-robed old man from the Deep Earth Sect examined Shi Hanshan's physical condition and his face sank, his eyes filling

with murderous intent. He stared at Lin Ming, an ominous color flashing in his eyes. “Young boy, you are quite ruthless! You’ve broken all his ribs, crushed his sternum, and severely injured his organs! It was only a minor match, and yet you were so vicious!”

The yellow-robed man wished to kill Lin Ming with a slap of his hand, but in the moment that he revealed his murderous intent, he felt a rich and blazing energy lock onto him. This energy came from Mu Yuhuang, and although it was smoldering hot, it caused his body to go completely ice cold, as if he was sinking into the nine layers of the abyss.

This was the feeling of standing near death’s door.

The yellow-robed man’s mind went cold. He of course had only thought this: it was impossible for him to truly do anything to Lin Ming. At most he would emit an aura to suppress him, but he hadn’t thought that just as he released his murderous intent, Mu Yuhuang would instantly lock onto him, and with such a terrifying energy!

“Everyone says that this old woman from Divine Phoenix Island has reached the late Revolving Core realm, but also that her life’s fire comes from the Silent Nine Emerald Flame found within the bottomless abyss. This fire is divided into nine parts and contains extreme heat and extreme cold. With just a touch, not even your bones would be left. Its might is beyond terrifying...”

The yellow-robed old man didn’t dare to provoke Mu Yuhuang. A character that could become an Island Master of Divine Phoenix Island was no ordinary character, especially since this was the

territory of Divine Phoenix Island.

He quashed his thoughts of suppressing Lin Ming with his aura. As he held onto Shi Hanshan, he flicked a white pill into his mouth.

He coldly stared at Lin Ming and gave an icy cough, “So young, and yet your actions are so evil. Yet you actually have the face to preach to Thundercrest Sect’s Zhou Xiaoling. Truly ridiculous!”

Since he wasn’t able to punish Lin Ming, the yellow-robed old man could only mock him. Less than half an hour ago, Lin Ming had taught Zhou Xiaoling a lesson for being too vicious. The yellow-robed old man planned to use this matter to embarrass Lin Ming.

Lin Ming maintained his calm. He slowly put away the Heavy Profound Soft Spear and slowly said, “I don’t understand what Senior is implying. Shi Hanshan used vicious words to provoke me, using shameless methods to stir me up. Should I have endured his baseless insults and humiliation, and then stayed my hand and treated him with courtesy? The Deep Earth Sect’s defensive shield martial skills are tough and also conserve true essence. If I don’t go all out with my attacks, then what happens once my strength is all consumed? When my strength is exhausted, will your good disciple easily defeat me and then proudly claim to everyone how he did so, wagging his silly little tail?

“If I’m verbally humiliated by others, should I stretch out my face and let them slap me? Does Senior think I am so cheap? Is the Deep Earth Sect so sad that they shame the disciples of Divine

Phoenix Island, but don't have the guts to withstand retaliation?"

Lin Ming's words were extremely insidious. Not only were they derisive, but they also pointed out the conflict between Divine Phoenix Island and the Deep Earth Sect.

After seeing the yellow-robed old man being berated, the Divine Phoenix Island disciples felt much more relaxed in their hearts.

The yellow-robed old man's lips twitched. He coldly humphed, saying, "What a flippant tongue! Do you think that I'm blind? Your strength obviously surpasses Shi Hanshan by a great deal, and you could definitely have restrained your hand after breaking his shield so that you didn't injure Shi Hanshan. Yet you still made such a vicious attack, severely wounding him. How can you explain this!

Lin Ming unhurriedly said, "I can't explain and I don't want to explain. But if Senior really insists on asking for an explanation, then I also want Senior to explain a matter to me. The Five Element Region's six sects together obviously surpass Divine Phoenix Island by a large margin. Yet, at this banquet, you dare to band together to bully my Divine Phoenix Island, taking several people to fight a single person to wear them out. Where is the honor in this? Where is the honor in trying to force Divine Phoenix Island into a situation where they have no one they can send out to battle. How can Senior explain this?"

The yellow-robed old man suddenly looked ashen, unable to speak. In such an embarrassing debate, his own words had been thrown back at him, and he was completely lacking a means to

respond. One had to feel sorry for this Revolving Core master. His strength far surpassed Lin Ming, and yet he had lost to Lin Ming in a war of words. Once this event was made known, he would become the laughingstock of the entire Five Element Region.

“Well said!”

With such a fantastic matter, the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island couldn't help but applaud. They had been holding their breath this entire time, refraining from speaking, and at this moment Lin Ming had spoken for everyone, maliciously ruining the face of this Deep Earth Sect elder.

Ahh, this was just too refreshing a feeling!

Even old lady Yuhuang, whose expression had been sullen and icy from the start of the banquet, had a hint of a smile on her face. “Shi Zhongkun, you too have a day where you were defeated under the hands of a junior. I wonder just how you'll swallow this shame.”

In the texts, they often described wars of words between scholars, who used their lips as spears to argue, piercing through the other's heart of understanding. Between martial artists, this was sometimes the case too.

Although Lin Ming's words weren't able to shake Shi Zhongkun's heart of martial arts, it was still enough to make him eat his own crap.

It also made Mu Yuhuang, who had been very uncomfortable for these last couple of weeks, much happier.

“Boy, well done. I’ll also note this down as your win and reward you.”

Mu Yuhuang said with a true essence sound transmission.

Lin Ming happily replied, “Thank you, Senior Yuhuang.”

Lin Ming had subconsciously changed from Master Ancestor Yuhuang to Senior Yuhuang. Calling this old lady Master Ancestor Yuhuang was just too weird.

But Mu Yuhuang was very happy at this moment. Naturally, she wouldn’t care about such minor matters.

As Lin Ming looked up, he happened to see Mu Qianyu looking at him. She was brightly smiling at him, a vibrant shine in her eyes. She said with a true essence sound transmission, “Fantastically done!”

Chapter 368 – Disdaining All Heroes

After Lin Ming brutally beat up Shi Hanshan and defeated Shi Zhongkun in a war of words, the morale of the Divine Phoenix Island disciples sharply rose, the morose atmosphere that surrounded them instantly swept away.

After suffering the indignity of the six sects' actions and then also being suppressed by their joint effort, a simmering rage had been brewing within their chests.

This wasn't only Lin Ming's victory, but a victory that emboldened everyone. With just a few words, he had been able to give voice to the thoughts of the Divine Phoenix Island disciples, and vent out their frustrations for them.

At this moment, Lin Ming's previous status as an outsider had been fully accepted by everyone else; no one envied him anymore. Instead, their admiration and fondness for him continued to grow. Several young girls gazed at Lin Ming, ooh-ing and aah-ing at him, talking about him, their young and pretty faces flushed red with excitement.

But the complexions of the Five Element Region disciples were actually not good at all. Their hearts were full of jealousy that showed on their faces.

“This Lin Ming is far too arrogant!”

“Humph. His arrogance won't last for long. Since he has a

Houtian realm strength, he'll be drawn into the battle of Houtian masters. Lin Ming's talent is real, but he's still far too young and naïve."

"Yes, Shi Hanshan is a core disciple, but his talent is just so-so. There are also direct disciples stronger than him, and above that are even disciples like Huo Ruyan, Zhou Lie, Bai Aoxuan, and other such characters."

"Mm. The six sects' chief disciples aren't to be messed with. Not mentioning the other sects, Shi Hanshan's senior-apprentice brother Shi Dingtian won't stand idly by after this."

"A beautiful tree in a forest will be destroyed by the wind. The six great sects won't let things end so simply."

Now that things had come to this, the simmering anger between Divine Phoenix Island and the six great sects had reached the boiling point. Now it was no longer just a comparison of skills. As soon as one went onstage, they would be using their full strength and all of their special skills until the other party was defeated.

Once they were defeated, it would be a miserable end.

Onstage, Shi Zhongkun's complexion had fallen to the ground. He was a Revolving Core master, since when did he have to suffer the berating words of a junior? Wasn't this even more embarrassing than losing to those other old bags?

“Good, very good! Heroes always come from the young; this old man has truly experienced a wonderful scene! Hanshan’s character is honest and his talent is low. He cultivates diligently every day and seeks the martial path with his whole heart, but now he was actually bullied by your strength today and wounded to this point! Since Hanshan is weaker than you, this old man has nothing to say! But, let me tell you, there is always a higher mountain and always a stronger human. When you use your greater strength to bully others in such a cruel fashion, you should also expect that someone else with an even deeper cultivation will one day use you as a stepping stone and crush you under their feet!”

“My Five Element Region’s six great sects have countless masters all around. This old man wants to see, for just how long will you be able to win?”

Shi Zhongkun’s words could be considered harsh, but Lin Ming only sneered. What a well said ‘honest character, low talent’. If such a scumbag could be considered honest and simple, then the master Netherworld Demon Emperor of Silent Demon Emperor City could be considered the most kind and merciful of individuals.

Lin Ming said loud and clearly, “The world is vast, and there are as many geniuses as clouds in the sky. I’ve never thought that I am among the top heroic elites of this world’s youths. Even at my age, there are many powerful people that already surpass me. You said that I use my strength to bully others, and you’re not wrong, but that’s because I always wish to beat up the scum of the earth. If there are people of your Five Element Region that wants to rely on their cultivation to crush me under their heel, then I, Lin Ming, am standing right here! I will receive all comers! Whoever many come, I’ll fight that many!”

Lin Ming's words were like a divine clarion bell; they reached the clouds, split the earth, and resounded through the entire audience.

Even Shi Zhongkun was stunned. He stared speechless at Lin Ming, this boy was crazy! He wanted to single-handedly resist all the masters of the six great sects?

With Lin Ming's word, the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island were seething in an elated frenzy. The men were yelling, and the women were screaming.

“Big Brother Lin is too awesome!”

“Big Brother Lin, well said!”

“Senior-apprentice Brother Lin is too sexy! Aah!!”

Whether or not Lin Ming could fulfill his words, no one knew. But presently, when Lin Ming had spoken, his heroic spirit had speared straight into the skies, causing the Divine Phoenix Island disciples' blood to boil, as if their entire bodies had been lit with an explosive passion.

People were creatures that were easily infected with emotion. But to those that were able to incite the mood of the crowd, this was the most charming time of their lives.

At this time, Even Mu Qianyu, who was sitting beside old lady Yuhuang, felt her heart speed up a bit. She lightly said, “This fellow Lin Ming really knows how to stir up trouble.”

Old lady Yuhuang showed a rare smile. She knew that the reason Lin Ming had said these words was that he wanted to repay her gratitude. She laughed a bit and said, “This kid, he hasn’t even bothered with the rabbit but wants to shoo the eagle. If he wins the next five or six matches, all the treasures I’ve been saving will be robbed by him.”

Mu Qianyu covered her mouth as she giggled, not saying anything.

Old lady Yuhuang glanced at Mu Qianyu with a sarcastic eye, “Yu’er, how come you’re smiling? Don’t you feel bad? These things were meant to be passed to you later.”

Mu Qianyu was a Saintess of Divine Phoenix Island, and the Vermillion Bird blood essence would naturally be passed to her later. As for Mu Bingyun, although she too was a Saintess, she had the bloodline of the Blue Luan within her body; the Vermillion Bird blood essence was useless to her.

Mu Qianyu said, “Yu’er doesn’t feel bad at all. Although the Vermillion Bird blood essence will be beneficial to my cultivation, it will be of far greater benefit to Lin Ming. Using it on Lin Ming would be the best use of it. Honorable Master will surely not regret this decision.”

Mu Qianyu was born with a very pure and rich Vermillion Bird bloodline. With the fusion of some Vermillion Bird blood essence, her bloodline concentration wouldn't increase by much; at best it would enhance her fire-attribute true essence fusion compatibility by a bit. But, if given to Lin Ming, it would greatly increase his Vermillion Bird bloodline to the point where he would be able to practice the core sections of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle', and thus greatly enhance his strength.

"I didn't say I wouldn't give it to him, but you actually feared that I would go back on my promise..." Mu Yuhuang meaningfully glanced at Mu Qianyu. Mu Qianyu instantly panicked, and then quickly calmed her manner and restrained herself.

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Shi Zhongkun sneered, saying, "Boy, remember the words you just said. Words that you speak are the same as water that's thrown out – it can't be taken back. Now you've flaunted your fast tongue and made such a ridiculous and foolish challenge! This old man wants to take a good, hard look at just how many of the heroic elites from the six great sects you will be able to challenge!"

When Shi Zhongkun spoke to this point, he didn't bother to speak anymore. He lifted the half-dead Shi Hanshan and stepped offstage. Against a stupid junior that was soon going to be turned into a complete fool, there was simply no need to argue.

Of course, this was only a method of consoling his own mind. In fact, after he stepped down from the stage, his face remained livid, to the point where the many disciples of the Deep Earth Sect were

afraid to even take a breath.

As all the disciples of the banquet exploded in a range of emotions, the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island madly cheered on Lin Ming. No matter whether or not he would be able to fulfill the words of his declaration, their anger had been vented.

As for the Five Element Region disciples, they were completely dismissive of Lin Ming. They held the mindset of watching the matches and waiting to see Lin Ming be tormented.

“I wonder how long Lin Ming can last?”

“I’m guessing at most two or three matches. The six great sects will not allow Lin Ming to keep showing off his arrogance. Once one is defeated, the next one to go up will be stronger. But as for the six chief disciples, they won’t participate in this demeaning show, or else Lin Ming won’t even be able to last past the first round.”

“Mm, Senior-apprentice Brother Sun is right. Lin Ming is just disgracing himself. Senior-apprentice Brother Sun has extraordinary strength, and has also stepped into the Houtian realm. Perhaps Senior-apprentice Brother Sun would like to go onstage yourself and have a good match against this Lin Ming!”

“Well, uh...” The voice of the youth surnamed Sun paused. He wished he could slap this ass-kissing idiotic junior-apprentice brother to death. He hesitated, and then pretended to ponder for a moment before finally saying, “I’ll have a look at how things go

first.”

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The Deep Earth Sect disciples were suppressed too much by Shi Zhongkun’s incensed expression. Finally, one disciple couldn’t bear it any longer and jumped onstage. He stood at the center of the stage and clearly said, “Deep Earth Sect’s Chen Kun, currently 19 years old. Please advise!”

“Chen Kun! He’s a Deep Earth Sect direct disciple!”

“I didn’t think that the first one to go onstage would be a direct disciple! This banquet competition has developed too quickly. It’s been an hour or two, but the level of the participants has already risen to the level of direct disciples; the other people hadn’t even had a chance to go onstage.”

“Who knew that this random factor Lin Ming would show up from nowhere. But, this Chen Kun is not someone who can be easily played with. The outcome of this match is hard to determine, but he will definitely be able to force Lin Ming into using his full strength.”

Chen Kun extracted a long staff from his spatial ring. This staff was one of the common weapons of the Deep Earth Sect.

“Boy, it’s not that I, Chen Kun, am bullying you, but it is that you are far too arrogant. You don’t even place my Five Element

Region's six great sects in your eyes. Since you dare to challenge the six great sects with your lone strength, how could I fear you? Watch my staff!"

Chen Kun fired his staff. This staff was naturally an elastic staff. The staff danced in the sky, creating brown phantoms that connected into a single stretch, as if sand had covered the entire sky. It was impossible to tell where Chen Kun's attack would come from.

Against these overwhelming staff phantoms, Lin Ming only thrust out his spear. This spear brought forth 10,000 filaments of vibrating true essence. The azure vibrating true essence flushed out like a tide. Under such a tide, all of the staff phantoms were dispelled, turning into nothing.

In an instant, Lin Ming arrived in front of Chen Kun, stabbing his spear towards Chen Kun's stomach!

"Mm!?" Chen Kun's complexion changed, "Cliff Rock Barrier!"

As a disciple of the Deep Earth Sect, he naturally knew several defensive martial skills. Chen Kun waved his hand, and a thick wall of earth appeared in front of him. Lin Ming's spear smashed into the wall, shaking the origin energy that created it!

Chen Kun insidiously smiled. He took advantage of when Lin Ming's weapon was caught in the wall and raised his staff, pounding down on Lin Ming's shoulder. "Earth Opening Staff!"

The long staff howled as it came down, the origin energy twisted around it, turning into a three foot thick staff shade. As it came down, it looked like a golden pillar that was about to smash Lin Ming. If this staff struck, it would definitely break his collarbone, causing Lin Ming to lose his combat strength.

In that split-second, Lin Ming cried out, “Explode!”

Flow like Silk erupted. The foot thick earth wall was actually blown into powder by 10,000 vibrating azure true essence filaments!

Lin Ming’s spear swept out, his spear potential like an unstoppable wave!

It collided with the golden staff shade!

Bang!

As the staff and spear intersected, the golden pillar staff shade broke apart, but Lin Ming’s Heavy Profound Soft Spear curved into a crescent moon, as if it were about to break.

“Body Tearing Bone Shattering Fist!”

In that last moment, Lin Ming had actually held onto the spear with a single hand. With his free right hand, he punched out!

At this moment, Chen Kun was using his full strength to support the staff in his hands – where would he have the strength to defend? He could only stare with disbelief as Lin Ming's fist punched his chest.

Chen Kun only saw his eyes go dark for a moment as he flew backwards.

Chapter 369 – Battle Marathon

Chen Kun flew back several dozen feet before finally managing to use his staff to ground himself. He kneeled on the floor, panting and taking in great gulps of air. The punch that had struck his chest was too strange; the energy in that attack had spread through his organs, causing his blood to roil.

He stood up, an expression of shock coloring his face. In a battle of masters where both parties were using their full strength, they naturally had to also utilize their utmost concentration. If there was even the slightest mistake, it was possible that they would be defeated. But Lin Ming was actually able to hold a spear in one hand and use his other to attack.

What sort of strange strength was this?

After a martial artist reached the Pulse Condensation period, their bodily strength wouldn't increase by much. They could only depend on using the true essence to indirectly enhance their strength. But because the Deep Earth Sect martial artists had earth-attribute origin energy, they had a large advantage in the aspect of strength.

But in that moment, Chen Kun had been completely suppressed by Lin Ming's brute force.

Chen Kun could not accept this.

"I admit defeat."

Chen Kun clenched his teeth, then turned around and walked offstage.

As he admitted defeat, there was a collective gasp among the banquet audience.

“This Lin Ming, I don’t know, but he must have studied some cultivation method that gave him such a bizarre body strength. He was actually able to withstand Chen Kun’s Earth Opening Staff and retaliate, it’s no injustice that Chen Kun lost.”

“Lin Ming defeated two Deep Earth Sect masters in a row, even the direct disciple Chen Kun lost. After him would be the top four or five ranked direct disciples.”

“It’s impossible for Lin Ming to win. But even so, to win by wearing him down in a battle of attrition would be truly disgraceful. Even after they win, the Five Element Region’s six great sects will still lose face. Just look at the Thunderclap’s complexion.”

At the Thundercrest sect’s banquet table, Zhou Lie had a poor complexion. Ever since Lin Ming had said he would challenge the six great sects of the Five Element Region, he hadn’t been able to relax.

He wasn’t worried that Lin Ming would continuously win. After all, if dozens of Houtian martial artists all challenged a Pulse Condensation period martial artist, he would eventually slip and

be defeated. This was inevitable. Let alone Lin Ming, even the Mu Qianyu of the past would not have been able to do this.

What Zhou Lie worried about was the entire situation of the Five Element Region's Houtian masters waging a protracted war against a Pulse Condensation period junior. Once this matter was made known, it would truly be shameful.

He couldn't help but glance at Zhou Xiaoling. His little sister was actually still eating at this moment, her head nearly in her bowl. Zhou Lie frowned, "You're still in the mood to eat?"

"If I don't eat then what am I going to do here?" Zhou Xiaoling vaguely muttered as she looked at Lei Zhenzi, puzzled. She had a very bored and tired look in her eyes. "Anyway, fights of this level have nothing to do with me, so what about it."

Zhou Lie was speechless. He sighed as she said, "It's as you said, Lin Ming really won!"

As Zhou Xiaoling swallowed some food, she said, "It's not simple for him to lose. Why don't you go up and finish this yourself then?"

Zhou Lie was exasperated with his little sister. To tell him to go up onstage himself, that was a complete joke.

Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing still hadn't moved. Lin Ming had challenged the heroic elites of the Five Element Region, but that

didn't mean that the other disciples of Divine Phoenix Island would just stand there.

Zhou Lie expected that if he or any of the other chief disciples took action, then Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing would come out to meet them. These two fellows were very difficult to deal with, especially Mu Dingshan. His cultivation was just a step away from reaching the middle Houtian real. Zhou Lie had to admit that his odds of defeating him were less than half.

At that time, things would become a battle between the direct disciples of the sects. Meanwhile, Lin Ming would walk offstage and recover his strength.

This was not what Zhou Lie wished to see.

Even for Zhou Lie, he couldn't afford to lose or win against this fellow. He could already imagine that if he entered the stage, there would be a rumor spreading throughout the entire Five Element Region and South Horizon Region, that the Five Element Region's six great sects had collaborated to besiege the 16 year old Divine Phoenix Island Saint rank talent Lin Ming. Even the chief disciple Zhou Lie had to use the strategy of having several others wear Lin Ming down, and then only managing to barely defeat him.

These rumors were unpredictable. Especially because those that spread these rumors would embellish many details to bring more attention to their stories.

Therefore no matter how Zhou Lie won, the end result would be

that Lin Ming's status and influence would rise. As for his own reputation, he would be extremely discredited in the Five Element Region, his face falling to the floor. Zhou Lie didn't want to place himself in this situation.

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At this time on the stage, Lin Ming had taken a pill from his spatial ring and swallowed it. In these two matches, he had consumed a small bit of his strength. Lin Ming's endurance was amazing. He had an excessively abundant amount of blood vitality, and after he had reached Tempering Marrow where his blood was like gold soup, Lin Ming's blood vitality was like a massive raging inferno.

Such a martial artist that had an extremely blood vitality, even if they fell into the 10,000 layers of the abyss, no ghost of spirit would dare to approach them, or they would instantly be purified.

After eating up a pill and revolving the 'True Primal Chaos Formula', Lin Ming rapidly restored the true essence he had consumed.

"Who wants to be next?"

Lin Ming's arm pressed against the barrel of his spear, the nine foot nine inch Heavy Profound Soft Spear proudly displayed. A man and his spear stood with complete pride in the center of the stage, challenging all martial artists from the six great sects to meet him. At this time, the only way to describe Lin Ming would be

that his heroic spirit soared to the skies!

A quarter of an hour ago, the Divine Phoenix Island disciples had been continuously challenged by the Five Element Region disciples. All of the junior disciples had gathered, but they were overwhelmed facing against such an endless enemy.

But now, with just a few words from Lin Ming, they suddenly all filled with a rapturous pride. At this moment, the image of this solitary figure onstage had etched itself into the hearts of many present.

Of course, the reaction of the Five Element Region disciples was the complete opposite.

“F*ck! This kid is too arrogant!”

“He dares to bully my Five Element Region!?”

The youths were easily stirred up. Now, with someone challenging them while looking down on them at the same time, how could they sit still?

A youth carrying a longsword that was sat near Zhan Yunjian stood up. “Senior-apprentice Brother Zhan, I’ll go up and compete against him.”

The youth was already itching to fight. In the last year, his strength had increased by leaps and bounds, and he was looking

for a chance to display his newfound strength. Now that Lin Ming had won a series of battles, if he could stop his winning streak, he would surely become famous.

“Mm...” Zhan Yunjian nodded. Since the Five Element Region had already decided to defeat Lin Ming in a battle of attrition, they should double down on this plan. In any case, their reputation had already fallen. Several days from now, this series of events would spread regardless of what happened. Thus it was best to just send a few of the top direct disciples out and end this farce as quickly as possible.

Otherwise, if Lin Ming defeated the next seven or eight challengers, that would truly be an ugly sight to behold.

“He shouldn’t have much strength left, just go up and directly defeat him.” Zhan Yunjian said.

The youth smiled, “This boy is dreaming. Does he really think he can keep winning? Not even a chief disciple can accomplish this. I think that this boy wants to become famous so badly that he’s gone insane. Since I’m going up, I’ll make sure to awaken him from this fanciful dream!”

As the youth spoke, he leapt onstage.

Zhao Yunjian let out a long breath. Even if Lin Ming lost, he would still become famous throughout the entire South Horizon Region and Five Element Region. His reputation might even compare to that of Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun; this was not

something that the direct disciples of the Five Element Region could compare with.

But in the end, Lin Ming was lacking time – this was as far as he came. Although he was able to defeat Chen Kun, how would he fare against a top direct disciple? He would probably barely be able to win. In the worst case, even if he won, he would still exhaust his strength. If so, how many could he defeat?”

“Storm Valley’s Chu Yunfei, I wish to experience just what ability you have to be confident!” Chu Yunfei pointed between Lin Ming’s eyebrows, the provocation obvious in his voice and actions.

Storm Valley’s Chu Yunfei was the fourth ranked direct disciple. It was worth mentioning that he was less than 19 years old and had an astonishing talent. He was considered one of the top four heroic Storm talents.

Because a fourth ranked direct disciple had entered the stage, after that would be the third and second ranked direct disciples. And after the top direct disciples were the chief disciples, characters like Zhan Yunjian, Bai Aoxuan, Zhou Lie, and others.

However, Lin Ming also knew that the chief direct disciples were proud and haughty, and would not participate in this group siege.

‘Since these chief disciples aren’t going to move, I’ll sweep clean the direct disciples of the six great sects, and use these battles to consolidate my Tempering Marrow boundary and enhance my strength.’

Lin Ming never thought to take the initiative and challenge the six chief disciples. He couldn't discern the true strength of these individuals. Although Lin Ming had full confidence in a one on one fight, as for fighting several of them in a row, he wasn't arrogant to such a degree.

As Lin Ming faced Chu Yunfei on the stage, he took out the Heavy Profound Soft Spear.

“Hehe, your winning streak stops here!” Chu Yunfei brightly smiled. Without any action at all, the blue sword that was in the scabbard on his back flew out on its own, into his hand.

Lin Ming was slightly surprised. “This is... the Concept of Wind?”

Lin Ming instantly realized that the sword was pulled out from the scabbard by wind, then sent to Chu Yunfei's hand. This was a sort of ability that allowed one to control wind. This sort of wind controlling ability was truly eye opening. “The top ranked direct disciples of the Five Element Region really have their own strengths. For the Storm Valley martial artists to comprehend the Concept of Wind also makes sense!”

“Oh? You saw through it? Not bad. My comprehension of the Concept of Wind ranks among the top of Storm Valley's younger generation!” Chu Yunfei was completely confident in himself. He had broken through to the Houtian realm at 18 years of age, and was also called one of the four heroic Storm talents. Naturally, he

had areas he excelled in.

“To be defeated under my hands is not an injustice!”

Chu Yunfei slashed out. His sword speed was fast to the point that only the sword light could be seen.

His knees were slightly bent, his body flying, his movements strange. Strong winds formed a whirling blue vortex around him, his figure turning into a series of images. Every sword light turned into a thin light, hiding in the gaps in the air. This true essence was highly compressed but also had a strange attack pattern; it was virtually impossible to defend against!

Lin Ming's expression was solemn. He sent out his sense and captured the location of every sword light.

Golden Roc Shattering the Void!

Under the support of the movement technique, Lin Ming's figure instantly vanished.

Cha cha cha!

The floor tiles were torn apart by the sharp sword energy, the cuts smooth like a mirror.

Lin Ming was like a fish in water. Every sword light was forced

apart by Flow like Silk, and he danced within the storm of sword energy, seizing every chance to attack.

“Humph, in terms of speed you cannot compete against me!” Chu Yunfei’s lips arced up. He flicked his wrists, and the sharp lines of sword energy dissolved into fluttering cotton, fusing into the wind.

In that moment, wind swirled up into several vortexes. Several blue tornadoes appeared on the stage, swaying like massive snakes as they closed in on Lin Ming.

Chapter 370 – Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky

Three blue tornadoes twisted on the stage. Because of their rapid rotation, they issued a keening sound like a saber that was carving ice. Even the floor tiles that were supported by an array formation were grinded to pieces. If one was caught in this wind, their miserable fate could be imagined.

These three tornadoes were likely sword formations created by wind.

The power of the Concept of Wind lay in its ability to fuse sword and wind. The wind would never disperse. If wind was cut, it would still be wind. And in that wind was contained a sword energy that also wouldn't fade away.

“The sword energy formed a tornado formation. What a terrifying Concept of Wind. Chu Yunfei is truly a talent blessed by the heavens; he might have already touched upon the origin of all wind!”

“Truly a rare spectacle. The four heroic Storm talents truly live up to their outstanding reputation.”

“The sword energy that formed the tornadoes cannot be cut. I wonder how Lin Ming will block this attack.”

Everyone under the stage watched with shining eyes, waiting to see if Lin Ming would be able to resolve this attack, or if he would lose.

When masters exchanged moves using their full strength, it was normal for the winner to be decided in just a few moves.

Lin Ming saw the tornadoes formed from sword energy and let out a light breath. This Chu Yunfei's comprehension of the Concept of Wind might even surpass his own.

The seven great sects of the Five Element Region had studied and researched their sole attribute for countless years. It was normal for them to have comprehended the Concepts of their various attributes. When Lin Ming had fought Shi Hanshan, his Earth Essence Shield had also contained a shadow of the Concept of Earth. It was only that he didn't truly understand the Concept of Earth, so he was unable to realize it.

Now that he thought back the tenacity that the Earth Essence Shield had displayed when it deformed but still didn't break, Lin Ming realized that this was probably some skill that belonged to the Concept of Earth.

Lin Ming still had a ways to walk on his own path of martial arts.

He concentrated on the Heretical God Seed and began to revolve the true essence within his body. He could already hear the sharp wind edges begin to cut apart his true essence protection; this was the aftermath of the sword energy and wind fusion.

Chu Yunfei sneered. "True essence is fused into the wind, and the sword energy melts into the wind. The wind is the sword, the

sword is the wind, if he truly wants to dodge this sword energy, that's only possible if he can dodge the wind itself! Now die!"

Sword energy erupted, and the three tornadoes rushed towards Lin Ming from all angles, wanting to strangle any path of escape.

Lin Ming's hair fluttered, his flapping clothes only torn apart by the tornadoes. He quickened the true essence in his body to the extreme, and his hand grasped the Heavy Profound Soft Spear. The power of fire that was contained within the Heretical God Seed suddenly erupted.

Huu!!!

The azure light that covered the Heavy Profound Soft Spear faded away. In its place, a blazing fire combusted on the spear, a brilliant red light that shined like the setting sun, causing everyone watching to avert their gaze from such a blinding radiance.

"What!?"

Chu Yunfei was shocked beyond measure – dual-attribute body!?

This Lin Ming actually had a rare thunder and fire dual-attribute body! He could control thunder and control fire at the same time! No wonder he had been able to enter into the Vermillion Bird Faction.

In that split-second, Chu Yunfei wasn't able to reflect on what was happening. Lin Ming's spear seemed to ignite the void, the Heavy Profound Soft Spear billowing with a deep scarlet red as it swept at a tornado.

Suddenly, the wind that contained true essence was set on a blazing fire. Lin Ming's spear, to the utter disbelief of Chu Yunfei, broke apart a blue tornado.

After sword energy and wind fused together, it couldn't be cut apart. But, if the wind origin energy was burned to nothing, then the sword energy tornado would naturally be broken!

At the moment he had cut apart a tornado, Lin Ming suddenly felt as if there was a fire burning in his heart. The power of fire within the Heretical God Seed seemed endless, as if it were about to explode at any given moment.

This is...

Lin Ming suddenly realized that this was the result of continuously cultivating the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' for four months and reaching the second layer. The power of fire had gathered within the Heretical God Seed, tightly packing within. The qualitative and quantitative changes that had occurred had stirred up a resonance within the Heretical God Seed!

The law formulas of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' flashed across his mind. Lin Ming passed through the gap between the tornadoes, his feet treading upon the Golden Roc

Shattering the Void movement technique as he suddenly accelerated.

Flames spewed forth, the Heretical God Seed roared.

Lin Ming suddenly thrust out his spear!

“Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky!”

Bright flames soared forth. What Lin Ming had shockingly used was a fire-attribute martial skill from the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’.

A raging fire wound out, a brilliant crimson phoenix spread out its wings from the tip of the Heavy Profound Soft Spear and soared out!

Chu Yunfei was shocked. He gathered all of the true essence and wind origin energy that hadn’t dispersed, cutting down with his sword.

Bang!

An inferno erupted. Chu Yunfei’s hastily slashed sword naturally wasn’t able to stop the Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky that Lin Ming had gathered his potential to use. The fire origin energy burned away the wind, burned away all!

Soon, Chu Yunfei's figure was engulfed in flames. The true essence that protected his body severely trembled, and suddenly broke. Chu Yunfei flew backwards, his hair and clothes singed in countless spots. In that moment, the power of fire had sunk into his meridians, causing him severe internal injuries.

The disciples of Divine Phoenix Island were shocked. Lin Ming was actually a rare thunder and fire dual-attribute martial artist? Not only that, but he had actually studied the core Divine Phoenix Island cultivation methods? Just when did he study it?

Some disciples suddenly remembered that just a few days ago, there was an extremely fast ring of fire that had spread out from the Parasol Tree Pavilion. It was like a tornado that suddenly grew, blowing away the leaves of the parasol tree forest. Now that they thought back on it, the center of this ring of fire was the small building 22, where Lin Ming was staying.

Without a doubt, the one who had unleashed this ring of fire origin energy was Lin Ming during his cultivation. In order to have this sort of incident, one needed an extremely pure power of fire.

The Divine Phoenix Island disciples' minds were still wandering in the clouds as if they were in a fog. Mu Qianyu's beautiful eyes widened; she looked to the sky in incredible disbelief, staring at the flames that were still burning.

Four months ago, she had handed the jade slip that contained the first layer of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' to Lin Ming. And now, he had already reached the stage of Perfection.

Although this was an extremely fast speed, it wasn't enough to make her lose her calm.

But what she found inconceivable was the Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky. That was a martial skill that was only found within the second layer of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle'. But, she had only given the jade slip with the second layer to Lin Ming yesterday.

In that short time, he had actually learnt it?

What kind of monstrous learning speed was this!?

Mu Qianyu's chest was palpitating. At this moment, she met the puzzled eyes of old lady Yuhuang.

"Yu'er, what's going on here?"

"Honorable Master, Yu'er didn't violate the rules of the sect. Four months ago I had only passed down the first layer of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' to him. It was only when I obtained Honorable Master's permission yesterday that Yu'er gave him the following jade slip as well as some supplementary notes."

"You mean that he took only four months to fully complete the first layer of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle', and then used this as the foundation to learn Phoenix Wings Ascending

Sky in just a single day?” Mu Yuhuang stared with a charming pair of eyes that were filled with grace, making absolutely sure that Mu Qianyu wasn’t making some joke.

“Um, it should be like that...” Mu Qianyu wryly smiled. She felt that her own words held no credibility either. “Honorable Master, even Yu’er is inferior to Lin Ming’s talent at cultivating the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. When I had first passed him the first layer, I had only gone to take a bath, but by the time I returned he had already learnt how to create flame chains.”

Mu Qianyu had spent an entire day learning how to create flame chains. As for Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky, she had spent over half a month.

Mu Qianyu was a seventh-grade martial talent, and she also had a seventh-grade fire origin fusion compatibility, while also having a body with an inborn Vermillion Bird bloodline.

Compared to her, Mu Yuhuang had spent an even longer time.

Mu Yuhuang was well aware what it meant for Lin Ming to have such a terrifying practice speed. Although even Mu Yuhuang found this hard to believe, since Mu Qianyu had said it was so, this couldn’t be fake.

“This Lin Ming. He has a dual-attribute physique, his talent is amazing, and he has the perception of a monstrous genius. Not only that, but he has a martial intent, and also controls an earth-step Thunder Soul... how can such a person exist in this world?”

Mu Yuhuang's intuition told her that Lin Ming must have experienced some heaven-defying lucky opportunity.

There were countless lucky opportunities that could be found within the Sky Spill Continent, and there were many geniuses that had managed to obtain these chances. There were even some people that went from mediocrity to becoming a master overnight. However, Mu Yuhuang carefully analyzed Lin Ming's results, and came to the conclusion that his results weren't necessarily all because of the benefits from some lucky opportunity.

‘His constitution and cultivation could be obtained by some lucky chance. But his perception and martial intent should be an inborn talent. As for that earth-step Thunder Soul, Yu'er has already told me the complete process of how that happened. It was all because Lin Ming had risked his life in order to obtain it. Luck was a factor, but Lin Ming himself was the most important part. Regardless of anything, Lin Ming himself is a perfect talent. If the heavens have given Lin Ming a lucky chance, then right now the current Lin Ming is also a lucky chance of Divine Phoenix Island. If my Divine Phoenix Island can overcome this South Sea crisis, then my Divine Phoenix Island will truly live in a prosperous time...’ Mu Yuhuang took a deep breath as she thought to here. She glanced at Mu Qianyu. Mu Qianyu's eyes weren't moving, it was unknown what she was thinking.

Onstage, Lin Ming stood with his eyes closed. His thoughts were still immersed in that fleeting moment when he had used Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky, perceiving its insights and letting the fire origin energy freely flow.

A moment ago, he had only felt that the fire origin energy within his body had reached an extreme, and he had to vent it out or else he would have been sick. He had a revelation at that moment, and was able to recall the law formula for the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ second layer’s Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky. Then, he was able to smoothly use it without any jerky feeling, as if he had practiced this skill for a long time.

The reason that Lin Ming was able to learn the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ to such a degree and at such a speed had little to do with his perception. It was almost completely because of the Heretical God Seed.

With the Heretical God Seed, the power of fire within Lin Ming’s body was constantly nourished. It was not only extremely powerful, but also extremely obedient. When necessary, it could suddenly erupt from its compressed state, instantly enhancing Lin Ming’s strength by a large degree.

With such a strong controlling force, cultivating the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ was naturally much faster and easier.

In this match, although he hadn’t been able to reach a state where his cultivation was consolidated, it allowed Lin Ming to gain more insights and a deeper understanding of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. If he could lay such a foundation, it would be much easier to practice the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ later.

There were many martial skills found within the second layer of

the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ cultivation method. This was also a very timely boon for Lin Ming. Before now, Lin Ming’s style of attack had been too singular. Besides Flow like Silk, he had the coiling dragon steel needle and Thunderfire Annihilation.

Thunderfire Annihilation and the coiling dragon steel needle were both final master moves. As for Flow like Silk, that was not a pure martial skill. Thus, most of the time Lin Ming had used the ‘Foundation Spear Technique’. For instance, Flood Dragon Goes to Sea, Flowers in the Storm, and so on. When his cultivation had been lower, this was completely sufficient. But now, it was increasingly apparent that this was a weakness of his.

‘A battle is really a good way to enhance my strength. The competition at this banquet is actually a really good place to temper myself.’ Lin Ming thought with some happiness. He swallowed down a pill and relied on his formidable blood vitality to restore his true essence.

He held the Heavy Profound Soft Spear in his hands, his clear voice ringing in the air, “...Who is next?”

Chapter 371 – What Can You Do To Me?

‘Who is next’!???

Wasn’t this just a brazen challenge to them all? This was simply a naked slap to the face!

As Lin Ming shouted these words, the faces of the Five Element Region disciples began to turn blue.

Was this boy some invincible iron man? He had been in three continuous matches and had won all three, each opponent stronger than the last! But Lin Ming didn’t seem to show any signs that he was weakening!

“Too arrogant, he is far too arrogant! So f*cking, so so f*cking arrogant!!!”

A Deep Earth Sect disciple turned red; he had to use two continuous curse words to express how angry he was.

“This is really angering me to death! How come our chief disciples aren’t going onstage? Bao Aoxuan, Huo Ruyan, Zhan Yunjian, or any of them can make this kid eat his own words. As soon as they go up, he’ll be defeated!”

“You idiot, once the chief disciples go up, what do you think Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing are going to do? Once that happens, when the chief disciples battle each other won’t that little punk be

able to go down and rest? We've had to wear him down in a battle of attrition, but if we let all our efforts be for naught and start again from zero, what will happen to us?"

"Damn, this father is going to go up and ruin this punk's haughty attitude!"

A disciple stood up but was instantly pulled down by someone next to him. "Don't be dumb. Your strength isn't enough to reach the top five direct disciples. If you go up, you're just giving him more chances to show off!"

"Humph. I don't believe his physical strength is so great that he can be fine even through three battles. Does he think he's made of iron or something? Even if I can't win, I'll still waste away his strength!"

As the six great sects argued amongst each other, they couldn't help but acknowledge the inconceivable situation that was laid before them. That was that Lin Ming's endurance was beyond terrifying!

Although he had consumed true essence after every battle, this slow rate of consumption was simply outrageous to the point of making one's blood boil. It completely emitted a feeling that made one feel hopeless.

In five full breaths of time, there was actually no one who dared to enter the stage. After Chu Yunfei – who had ranked fourth among the direct disciples of Storm Valley – had been defeated,

besides Zhan Yunjian, there were only two people that ranked above him.

Thus, even if the second ranked direct disciple went to meet Lin Ming's challenge, even he might not be safe!

In a war of attrition, Lin Ming would lose without a doubt. Even a Saint rank talent wouldn't be able to persist through dozens of Houtian masters. But, the crux of the issue was just who would be the cannon fodder?

Of the six great direct disciples, any of them were an existence that was far more outstanding than Jiang Baoyun; their arrogance could be imagined. They were characters that valued their own image and pride above all else.

Even though this war of attrition was a disgraceful matter, everyone still wished to be the last one who was able to finally defeat Lin Ming and gain fame. How could these arrogant and proud disciples tolerate placing themselves in the position of cannon fodder for others?

"Ah! Someone hurry and go up! That kid just took some medicine, he's recovering!"

After ten breaths of time, some disciples of the Five Element Region were beginning to turn green. They were actually challenged and stopped here by a mere 16 year old boy who had trash talked them, and yet no one dared to step up. What kind of situation was this?

Especially since at this time, the newly converted Linmaniacs of Divine Phoenix Island began to raucously shout.

“Big Brother Lin, that’s my boy!”

“Big Brother Lin, you rock!”

“Big Brother Lin is a true man, a man whose flesh and blood are iron!”

“Lin Ming, you can do it, we believe!”

“Ah! Lin Ming, you sexy beast!”

The Divine Phoenix Island disciples were proud and jubilant. Before this they had been the ones who had been challenged to battle, and they were already stretched too tightly to deal with it.

But now, when Lin Ming had challenged the Five Element Region disciples to battle, no one dared to appear. There was simply no better feeling in the world.

Of course, there were a few disciples like Yan Fuhong that had an increasingly ugly complexion. Their faces had already sunk as far as they could. Yan Fuhong was horrified. He didn’t think that he had actually tried to mess with such an abnormal boy. If Lin Ming ever found out... Yan Fuhong dared not to think about what would

happen. Just the possibilities already sent shivers running down his spine.

Many of the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island had stepped on their chairs, some stripping their clothes and waving them.

This was simply a revival of madness.

It had to be known that Divine Phoenix Island disciples were always especially proud and arrogant individuals with a high view of themselves. Especially core disciples – they were the chosen of heaven among all chosen of heaven. The men cared much about their image, much less the women. Any random female disciples of Divine Phoenix Island already had a status that was hundreds of times superior to a country's princess.

But now, these young infatuated girls had lost all restraints and disregarded any pride, screaming and crying out at the top of their lungs.

Divine Phoenix Island had many female disciples. As these young Linmaniacs wept and moaned and screamed, even some of the other female disciples flushed red. These women were simply devolving into sex-crazed beasts! How could the disciples of the Five Element Region possibly permit this?

To male animals in nature, the most painful affront was to have many other beautiful female animals taken by another male animal, being unable to lift their heads.

Although humans often flaunted their wisdom and morals, this sort of animal disposition was etched into their very bones. These were the most basic instincts that were impossible to suppress.

The disciples of the Five Element Region were unable to bear such a massive pressure. A desperate blue-clothed youth stood up, a calm expression in his eyes, like a spirit that was unafraid of walking on death's edge. He walked onstage with resolution, preparing to serve as cannon fodder and bravely face death for the Five Element Region, becoming a heroic martyr. This self-sacrifice immediately ushered in looks of admiration and sympathy from those around him.

The blue-clothed youth had a thought that echoed in his mind. That was that he could die, but he would not die on his knees, and other such sayings.

To sacrifice one's life for honor and die as a martyr, for fame and justice – that was a worthy death.

Lin Ming was utterly speechless as he watched this idiot stand up. The reason that he had participated in this war of attrition was because he wanted to repay Mu Yuhuang and also to force himself to his limits, and use this chance to enhance his strength.

But this fellow that came up was only wasting his time.

His cultivation wasn't even at the Houtian realm.

However, fortunately a direct disciple of Storm Valley was finally unable to watch such a sad scene and stood up. He was the third ranked disciple of Storm Valley, Zhan Huo. He was slightly stronger than Chu Yunfei, but against someone like Lin Ming, he didn't have much confidence in himself.

“Brother, which one of us should go up?” The peak Pulse Condensation martial artist saw Zhan Huo stand up and asked him, his heart quivering. When he walked onstage, he was finally able to feel the pressure. This was a completely different feeling from the heroic self-sacrifice that clouded his mind earlier. This pressure made him intensely nervous, and as he heard the cheering from both sides, this pressure had reached the extreme.

As he faced Lin Ming who was standing calm and straight onstage, this pressure became a massive oppressive feeling, a crushing aura that he couldn't withstand.

He finally understood why even though there were dozens of Houtian realm disciples, no one had gone up for a full ten breaths of time. With all the heaven blessed talents and Revolving Core Elders watching this fight, the pressure to succeed could be imagined. Under such a compelling pressure, every person had to be careful about walking onto the stage.

Zhan Huo looked at this blue-clothed idiot and sighed. He sent a true essence sound transmission, “Go back. In the time that you fight him, he'll recover more energy than you can make him consume.”

The blue-clothed youth turned green. At the moment that he

wasn't sure what to do, Zhan Huo had walked onstage. "Storm Valley's Zhan Huo, please advise."

Zhan Huo pulled out his weapon, surprising everyone. This weapon was actually a whip.

A whip was much more difficult to use than a spear. Zhan Huo's whip seemed to be made from twisted animal sinews. The surface of the whip was embellished with a variety of sharp metal features, every one with keen edges and corners. If one was really lashed by this whip, their flesh would be mutilated.

This whip was very long, it was around 50 feet. Brandishing it was also very difficult in terms of control.

Lin Ming casually waved his spear, and drew a crescent move on the floor with the spearpoint. "Make your move."

Zhan Huo's lips curved up, showing a trace of a sly smirk and also a taunt. Lin Ming frowned, what was this fellow planning?

"Boy, consider it bad luck that you met me!"

As Zhan Huo spoke, he bent his knees and then suddenly leapt upwards!

"Mm? He jumped up?"

Zhan Huo jumped over 100 feet high, and then his ascending speed began to slow down. When he finally reached the point where he should fall back down, an unexpected event occurred.

Zhan Huo opened both arms wide, the clothes around him fluttering in the wind as he stopped in midair.

He's floating?

The Divine Phoenix Island disciples were shocked. Besides Storm Valley, the disciples from the other Five Element Region sects were also stunned. There were even slight changes in the expressions of some Divine Phoenix Island elders.

“Oh? This fellow is quite interesting. Storm Valley truly does produce geniuses that have an amazing comprehension of the Concept of Wind!”

“Zhan Huo is also one of the four heroic Storm talents. This weird comprehension of a Concept is no worse than Chu Yunfei's. Storm Valley's 1000 years of accumulated knowledge truly lives up to its reputation.

“Haha, the sect inheritances are one thing, but this Zhan Huo boy also has very good perception. This sort of flying technique is not something that any Storm Valley disciple can learn; it is an extremely difficult and challenging skill to grasp. In the younger generation, only Zhan Huo has understood this Concept utilization.

Lin Ming's face revealed a very strange expression.

Flying technique?

He watched as Zhan You swayed in the air. Periodically, a small current of air formed around him. This was a sign of the unstable wind origin energy that he controlled.

If this technique was compared to the Golden Roc Shattering the Void that Lin Ming cultivated, it had zero combat value. It could only be described as an extremely shoddy and useless technique.

However, Lin Ming was able to understand one matter. For someone below the Xiantian realm to fly was not a big deal at all. The reason that he had hid the secret of Golden Roc Shattering the Void was because he feared that this cultivation method would be too shocking and draw in a disaster. However, it seemed as if any heaven blessed rare talent with good perception would be able to comprehend a flying technique from the Concept of Wind.

Now he no longer needed to hide this. He had already revealed some secrets that had caused others to believe he had a monstrous perception. Even if he revealed his comprehension of the Concept of Wind, it shouldn't be too shocking; no one should suspect anything.

If one could freely use Golden Roc Shattering the Void, it was possible to suddenly change directions in midair. If this skill was used in combat, it would be very difficult to guard against.

At this time, Zhan Huo had already flown more than 200 feet high, there was only a palm-sized shadow left from him on the ground. He cunningly smiled, and then loudly said, “Lin Ming, in this battle I am now in an invincible position. Just what can you do to me?”

Zhan Huo was smart. He realized that he wasn't a direct match for Lin Ming, so he used his flying technique to float in the air. Then, he could use the superior length of his whip to attack. With the addition of his true essence fused into the wind, he would have an advantage in long distance attacks, and slowly consume Lin Ming's energy. With this, if the fight continued, even if he eventually lost he would have used up all of Lin Ming's energy, and he wouldn't have the ability to fight any longer.

Lin Ming could only passively be beaten by him. Although a martial artist was able to jump 200 feet high, by the time they did, they would have already lost their striking strength and velocity. At that time, all Zhan Huo had to do was move away from Lin Ming's jumping trajectory, calmly dodging him.

Chapter 372 – Spear Dancing In the Clouds

Zhan Huo proudly floated 200 feet in the air, a smug smile crossing his lips.

“The art of war says that those with the higher ground occupy the overwhelming advantage. Lin Ming, you have already lost!”

The truth was that Zhan Huo was hoping Lin Ming would jump into the air and fight with him. For any martial artist below the Xiantian realm, they would not be able to find leverage in the air. Thus, they naturally wouldn’t be able to block his attacks. At that time, Lin Ming would lose all of his jumping momentum and be at his weakest point.

Also, he wouldn’t be able to dodge any attacks, becoming nothing but an easy target. If Lin Ming dared to jump up, that was the same as putting his face out so that Zhan Huo could slap him. This was what Zhan Huo wished for.

“What a bastard!” A Divine Phoenix Island disciple openly denounced him. There were many other disciples that wished they could take the dishes and bowls on the table and throw them at Zhan Huo in the air.

“What a cheap and shameless method, is this the way you fight?”

“Are you Five Element Region disciples turtles or something? If you’ve got the guts, come down and fight!”

“This person doesn’t care about face at all! So shameless!” The young girls of Divine Phoenix Island made a simple judgement.

The Five Element Region disciples also had an ugly look. But as they remembered how Lin Ming had just stood there challenging them a moment ago, some calmed down, and some grit their teeth in anger; they didn’t want to be belittled and impeded by Lin Ming.

As long as they could defeat Lin Ming, any immoral and ignominious act would be permitted.

As for Zhan Huo, he turned a deaf ear to the jeers from the Divine Phoenix Island disciples. In every true battle since ancient times, as long as a tactic won, that was the only measure that mattered.

“Lin Ming, just stand there and be beaten by me. I’ll lash you to death. Watch my whip!”

Zhan Huo moved. True essence stirred within his entire body, and a blue light wrapped around his silver whip. There was a sharp sound as if the sky was split in half by the whip. The 50 foot long whip naturally couldn’t reach Lin Ming, but Zhan Huo had incorporated the Concept of Wind into his every attack.

With the whip shades fused into the wind, it was simply unpredictable.

Pa pa pa pa pa!

Dozens of whip phantoms slashed downwards, the silver metal mixed with a blue light brightening the sky. The thin lines of blue energy wove together, cutting apart the entire stage's tiles like a sharp knife, leaving deep scars.

Lin Ming covered his body with azure true essence. Even moving he was still struck by some true essence from the whip phantoms. He could instantly feel a faint icy energy contained within the whip phantoms that drilled into his body like a poisonous snake. This energy also contained a light corrosive nature, melting away the true essence in his body. Even though the power of the True Dragon was endless and immortal, it still required a great deal of energy to counteract.

Ka!

A large hole was ripped in Lin Ming's clothing.

‘Mm? The whip contains an icy energy that can pass through my protective true essence, what a bizarre attack method. The world is truly great, so many fantastic individuals exist.’

With the whip phantoms fused into the wind, one could manipulate the thousands of whip phantoms to simultaneously attack. One could even change attack directions at will. This was truly a breathtaking technique.

Lin Ming was interested in studying this technique and having a little match with Zhan Huo to gain some insights. But, now he had

consumed a bit too much true essence. If he really wanted to have an extended match with Zhan Huo, he wouldn't have the ability to fight a chief disciple once they appeared. Although a chief disciple was arrogant and treasured their own pride, if he continued winning, they would definitely challenge him.

“Haha, Lin Ming, are you only planning on hiding? You're just like a rat in the street, getting smacked around!

“Good! Since you want to hide then I'll turn your clothes into rags. When you're finally naked, let's see just how you'll continue hiding!”

Zhan Huo was deliberately angering Lin Ming. It seemed that the disciples of the Five Element Region really liked to use this approach. Lin Ming realized that since Zhan Huo was in the air and also attacking while maintaining his flying technique, his true essence consumption was much greater than his own. Zhan Huo's plan must have been to anger him so that he would jump into the air on his own. If he did that, Zhan Huo would have a great advantage.

Before a martial artist reached the Xiantian realm, they would minimize any unnecessary jumping as to avoid any opportunity of being aimed at. This was a common sense approach that even martial artists at the Strength Training or Viscera Training stage knew.

As for jumping dozens of feet, that was simply a suicidal attack that only an idiot would try. Initially, when Huo Gong had tried to assassinate Lin Ming in the skies of the Southern Wilderness,

because he had engaged Lin Ming in the sky, there was no place for him to leverage his strength. The result was that a high and mighty half-step Houtian master had been severely wounded by the Altering Muscle cultivation Lin Ming. Afterwards, he was even killed.

Of course, Lin Ming was an exception to this rule. The air was his grand stage.

“Since you want to anger me so much, it will be as you wish!” Lin Ming’s lips curved up in a smile, and he waved his long spear. His knees bent down, and he prepared to jump high.

“Mm?” Zhou Lie realized what Lin Ming was about to do, surprised in his eyes. He sneered, saying with disdain, “If he jumps then he will lose!”

Facing Zhan Huo’s roguish fighting style, the only way to deal with him was to compare consumption of energy with him. Since Zhan Huo was in the air, his true essence consumption must be much higher than Lin Ming’s. Once Zhan Huo’s true essence was fully exhausted, it would be Lin Ming’s victory. Of course, Lin Ming would also consume a corresponding amount of true essence. But it was still better than being defeated.

Jumping up into the air was tantamount to stepping into Zhan Huo’s home turf. When that happened, Lin Ming would only be a target, there was nowhere for him to find leverage to counterattack. If he couldn’t find a way to defend or dodge, he would undoubtedly lose.

Mu Yuhuang furrowed her eyebrows. Although she only knew Lin Ming for a short time, she could still feel that Lin Ming wasn't an impulsive character. He was courageous, but not blindly so. Otherwise, it would have been impossible for him to obtain the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder within Thundercrash Mountain. So why was he jumping into the air? Did he have some backup plan?

Mu Yuhuang glanced at Mu Qianyu and saw she was looking unsure too. They no longer spoke, instead turning their full attention to the match.

Peng!

The stage tiles that Lin Ming stepped on burst apart. Lin Ming shot upwards into the sky like an arrow!

“Haha, you're seeking death, boy!”

Zhan Huo raised his right hand and slashed out with his whip. This whip produced a wave of whip phantoms, converging on Lin Ming from all sides. This was just like a massive hive of bees coming at him, he would be ripped to shreds!

In a moment, Lin Ming would smash into this inescapable net!

“Lin Ming will lose.” Zhan Yunjian's eyebrows rose and he shook his head. Lin Ming was too eager to win, leading to his loss.

He hadn't expected that the Five Element Region would win in such a manner. Still, in the end they won...

The Five Element Region disciples' eyes lit up. This idiot had actually jumped up of his own volition, running himself into an attack!

Against such a dense and terrifying attack, one would be severely wounded after being stuck. But in such a match, once one was injured like this, it was the same as losing.

The Five Element Region disciples were elated. This palpable joyful feeling revealed itself in their words and actions.

"You small fry, let's see how you'll challenge anyone again! What kind of act are you going to show now!?"

"What goes up must come down, you will pay the price for your rampant arrogance!"

"Go die, you idiot!"

At this moment, Lin Ming didn't know that these Five Element Region disciples had assumed they had won and were cursing him. Of course, in that split-second, these curses were only in their hearts. Before they had even spoken halfway, Lin Ming had already run into the endless whip phantoms.

All of the whip phantoms converged from all directions! From the audience's perspective, they could clearly see that all of these whip phantoms that covered the heavens formed a dome. And in the center of this deadly dome was Lin Ming!

The dome of whip phantoms began to shrink at an alarming rate. As for Lin Ming, he rushed into the center! Lin Ming was about to run into this concentrated attack. Even if he had thick true essence that protected his body, he would still be bombarded by so many attacks and severely wounded!

As all of the whip phantoms converged onto a single point, Lin Ming suddenly dropped! His speed approached an extreme, and all that was left was a afterimage.

Bang!

With a fierce explosion, blue air currents surged in all directions. But Lin Ming was like a swift bird that flew out from the storm. As soon as he dropped, he flashed forward at an incredible speed, crossing the air in a half arc and bypassing this massive explosion. With his long spear in hand, he stabbed towards Zhan Huo from behind!

At this time, Zhan Huo was watching the brilliant rainbow energy that was produced from the explosion, a happy smile on his lips. He didn't think that he would win so easily. This Lin Ming was nothing but a mediocre simpleton in the end. Although he was brawny, he couldn't handle the provocation and had jumped up like the idiot he was to die. But he wouldn't be killed in a terrifying explosion like this, right?

If he had really died like this, that wouldn't be fun. It was best if he became a complete cripple, or at least if several of his meridians were destroyed. Maybe he could even win some true essence stones to spend.

As Zhan Huo thought that he had completed his mission and was preparing to come down, he suddenly felt a horrific fire origin energy stirring behind him. The sound of a roaring flame reached the back of his ears.

“Mm!?”

Zhan Huo turned around. To his horror, he saw a fiery crimson phoenix flying towards him, growing larger. It had already flooded his entire field of vision.

Lin Ming held his long spear, the spear point directed at him, spear dancing in the clouds!

Flames roared forth, reaching the heavens.

Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky!

Bang!

The massive inferno explosion produced a sound like a clarion phoenix cry, echoing throughout the world. Zhan Huo's body was

suddenly engulfed in this blazing flare!

As the explosion of fire passed, a shockwave of true essence blew out. Zhan Huo was like a dead fish, falling straight down from the sky.

The situation had changed too fast, this was completely unexpected!

Many of the Five Element Region disciples that were cursing and making nasty comments suddenly had their words die in their throats. Their arrogant and prideful expressions froze on their faces, utter disbelief clouding over them.

How... how was this possible!?

What just happened?

Lin Ming's speed was too fast. In addition, because of the cover of the explosion of fire, only a few people were able to clearly see Lin Ming's movements.

He had changed direction in midair. Not only that, but it was completely sudden and he had done so twice! Such agility and deft movement was totally alarming!

Even the Xiantian masters present gasped. Although they could fly, their movements in the air were inferior to their movements on ground. But Lin Ming's speed and ability to change angles in the

air caused them to feel utter shame!

Especially the many masters of Storm Valley. They all had expressions like they had seen a ghost.

This was absolutely the Concept of Wind! When had Lin Ming comprehended the Concept of Wind!?

And it was even more profound and wonderful than the Concept of Wind from Storm Valley. In comparison, Zhou Huo's flying technique was nothing but a joke!

Chapter 373 – Legend of the Saintess

A flying technique was a very peculiar utilization of a Concept's comprehension; not every disciple of Storm Valley was able to learn it. It had extremely high requirements of skill and perception, and usually within an entire generation, there would only be one or two people that were able to comprehend it. Zhan Huo's flying technique was already considered very good. It was just that his speed wasn't too fast, and it was impossible for him to hurry. In terms of combat potential, it was best used in the manner that Zhan Huo had just displayed, using crafty guerilla tactics.

But Lin Ming's flying technique was clearly usable in actual combat. In the air he was swift and agile, and he had completed three consecutive changes in direction. In just a breath of time, he had managed to completely dodge the terrifying explosion, soaring away in an arc. This left a deep image in everyone's mind.

Such flexible speed was not much inferior than a martial artist on the ground!

How had he managed to comprehend such a powerful Concept?

Within the knowledge of Sky Spill Continent, something like a Concept could only be realized by oneself – one had to comprehend it based on their own individual perception. If Lin Ming was a wind-attribute martial artist and was exposed to wind origin energy every day, and also practiced a wind-attribute cultivation method, everyone would just be able to accept this.

But Lin Ming was a dual thunder and fire martial artist, so how was he able to achieve such a high level of understanding of the Concept of Wind? It even overshadowed the disciples of Storm Valley!

The Storm Valley people looked extremely depressed. The blue-clothed elder that led them there had a pathetic, heartbroken expression. He felt like he was a normal chess player who was matched up against a chess master. He had thought he had won, and now everything was crumbling before him.

In the presence of so many people, where would Storm Valley recover its face?

Just where had this Lin Ming boy come from? How could someone with such a high perception exist?

In Divine Phoenix Island's seat of honor, Mu Yuhuang was taking a deep breath, her eyes shut, digesting the scene from just now.

Within a single night, he was able to learn Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky.

He wasn't a wind-attribute martial artist, yet he was able to comprehend the Concept of Wind. Not only that, but his attainments in the Concept of Wind even surpassed the disciples of Storm Valley.

Lin Ming's perception had already completely surpassed the

scope of her understanding.

Mu Yuhuang couldn't really believe that there was a youth that had such a terrifying degree of perception; Lin Ming must have experienced many lucky opportunities. But, what was undeniable was that his perception was truly outstanding. This included his heart, mind, talent, persistence... in a few words to describe him, he was simply a man who lived for the martial path.

“Am I witnessing the rise of a Peerless Emperor?” Mu Yuhuang muttered to herself.

She wasn't really excited. Instead, it was better to say that she was disturbed. If Lin Ming was an ordinary Saint rank talent that would stop at the Revolving Core realm in the future, Mu Yuhuang would be incomparably happy. But, if there was a chance that he would become an almighty Peerless Emperor, that was an outcome that caused her to worry.

The birth of a Supreme Elder required the accumulation of destiny. Not only the destiny of that genius, but also the destiny of a sect.

When such a character was born within a sect, it was no different than a very difficult childbirth. In order to birth one, it would require a massive twist of destiny. Some sects might not be able to bear this. To them, when such a monstrous earth-shattering genius appeared, it was not luck. Instead, it was the greatest of all disasters.

This sounded absurd, but history had already repeatedly probed this point. A future Peerless Emperor would often live an extraordinary life from the time they were young. As a youth they would cause great storms in the world, stirring wars and world-changing events. Causing a vast loss of life was nothing surprising.

Some sects that were insufficient in their heritage would often disintegrate within such a storm. But, because these Peerless Emperors were often influenced by the luck of their destiny, they would escape from the jaws of death, continuing in the world on their path to becoming a Peerless Emperor.

Does Divine Phoenix Island have such a heritage?

Mu Yuhuang was not able to answer this question.

If they did, Divine Phoenix Island might be able to fly into the future with endless prosperity, becoming a fifth-grade sect, or even becoming one of the few Holy Lands within the entire Sky Spill Continent.

It had to be known that a Peerless Emperor hadn't been born within the Sky Spill Continent for thousands of years. Mu Yuhuang had no idea how many of these powerhouses were left in the Sky Spill Continent. Most of them were secretive, hidden masters that were rarely seen. Perhaps most of them had already flown up into the Realm of the Gods.

But, if Divine Phoenix Island was found to be lacking...

Mu Yuhuang let out a loose breath, her mind in chaos. 27 years ago, the twin sisters Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun had been born into this world. They each had the respective Vermillion Bird and Blue Luan bloodlines. They were seventh-grade martial talents that also had a seventh-grade fire and ice origin energy fusion compatibility. A blessing like the appearance of these twin babies had never occurred within the entire history of Divine Phoenix Island.

Now Divine Phoenix Island was facing a powerful enemy in the South Sea Demon Region. But, the Five Element Region's six sects actually wanted to take this chance to loot them. Divine Phoenix Island was in a truly precarious and dangerous situation.

But at this time, Lin Ming appeared!

This tumultuous event was like a dense fog that covered Mu Yuhuang's eyes, giving her a sense of confusion. She was unable to predict what the future of Divine Phoenix Island would be like.

“Everything in this world has a destiny. The heavens give nothing but danger. If I act wrongly, there will be disaster! My Divine Phoenix Island stands at the crux of destruction and glory. If I hesitate in my actions, then I fear that the day of our doom is not too far away...”

Perhaps Lin Ming was a chance that the heavens bestowed upon Divine Phoenix Island. If they did not receive this chance, it might instead become a calamity.

After a long time, Mu Yuhuang opened her eyes and looked at Mu Qianyu. She calmly said, “Yu’er, after this banquet competition ends, I will receive Lin Ming as my official disciple. At that time he will be your junior-apprentice brother. Make sure that you guide him well.”

Mu Qianyu was stunned. She happily said, “I was planning on it even if Master didn’t say so.”

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As Zhan Huo fell, he was received by Storm Valley martial artists who jumped up to grab him. Otherwise, if he fell from 200 feet in the air, he would be severely wounded.

After assessing Zhan Huo’s situation and seeing that he was only burned and not too injured, Zhan Yunjian calmed down. He turned to the blue-clothed old man from Storm Valley and said, “Uncle Master, Zhan Huo is already the third ranked master of my Storm Valley’s younger generation. He had used every means, even shameless means to win, but was still defeated. Next would probably be the second ranked direct disciples of the six great sects. If they cannot win, I will personally challenge him!”

“Mm? You want to challenge him?”

“Yes. But we must first fight Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing. Us six against those three. First we will fight Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing so that Lin Ming can restore his strength. I don’t wish to take advantage of others when they are vulnerable!”

The blue-clothed old man traced his beard and then sighed, shaking his head, his heart filled with emotion. “Divine Phoenix Island has a great destiny approaching them. This Lin Ming is a dragon in a deep pool. With two more phoenixes added together, I have no idea what this will mean for the future of the South Horizon Region and the Five Element Region...”

After defeating Zhan Huo, Lin Ming ate a true essence supplementing pill. A pill wasn't a cure for everything; the true essence from this pill was different from the true essence that one saved up. Eating too many would ultimately affect one's strength.

Lin Ming hadn't even called out a challenge yet when a man stood up on his own. He was from the Golden Bell Mountain table area, and wore a loose golden robe. He was bald, and looked like a monk from a secluded monastery.

“Golden Bell Mountain's Xiao Chi, 20 years old. Please advise!”

The golden-robed youth's words and actions gave off a very stable and safe feeling. Lin Ming's pupils narrowed – middle Houtian realm!

The Five Element Region's six chief disciples all had cultivations at the top of the early Houtian realm. But none of them were truly at the middle Houtian realm. Yet this current youth, though he was not a chief disciple, was actually at the middle Houtian realm!

“That's Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao, the elder disciple from

Golden Bell Mountain!”

“Hey, a heavyweight finally came out. He is the elder brother of Golden Bell Mountain, and has already been famous for a long time!”

This man’s fame was like the shadow of a tree. When Xiao Chi was 17, he had already become known throughout the region. When he was 19 years old, he became the top ranked direct disciple of Golden Bell Mountain. His talent was a bit lacking, thus he wasn’t able to become the chief disciple of Golden Bell Mountain. But no one doubted his strength.

Within the younger generation, Xiao Chi was the same as an elder senior-apprentice brother. It could be said that within all of the non-chief disciples of the Five Element Region’s six sects, Xiao Chi was ranked at the top.

“Haha, Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao also entered the stage. With Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao here, Lin Ming will be nothing but a grasshopper jumping around!”

No matter how many matches Lin Ming won, the Golden Bell Mountain disciples all believed with their hearts that their elder senior-apprentice brother would be able to sweep him away.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao, you can do it!”

As if they were trying to overwhelm the cries from the Divine

Phoenix Island disciples, the Golden Bell Mountain disciples began to raucously scream and shout.

On the stage, Xiao Chi had a calm and serene expression. He didn't respond to the cries from the Five Element Region disciples. Instead, he smiled as he looked at Lin Ming, "In a few more months, I will be 21 years old. This banquet competition will probably be the last event that I participate in with my status as a junior. Originally I had wanted to challenge Mu Dingshan. Even though I'm weaker, I wanted to have a fair and honorable match against him. However, I didn't think that my last battle would be against you. Not only that, but I'm taking advantage of you in a vulnerable situation. Really, this act is truly without integrity."

As Xiao Chi spoke, he shook his head, laughing at himself.

According to the customs of the large sects, one would no longer be a junior of the younger generation once they reached 21 years of age. Since Xiao Chi had long been famous, he was a figure that many of his younger juniors looked up to. Naturally, he attached a great importance to his own character and reputation. Yet now, he was forced to battle against Lin Ming. But now that he was in this situation, he would stand up and face it.

"My talent is low, but I am taking advantage of my age to be in a superior position. Below the Five Element Region's six chief disciples, I am confident that I will not lose to anyone. If you can defeat me, then you have obtained the qualifications to challenge the chief disciples. But... don't look at the chief disciples' cultivations. Even though they are inferior to me in cultivation, their strength actually surpasses me by a great deal.

A chief disciple had always been raised to become the next successor of the sect. These fourth-grade sects had pooled all of their resources to train a single chief disciple. Naturally, the strength of other disciples couldn't compare to them.

“Thank you for the advice. Now, make your move.” Lin Ming had a very good impression of this Xiao Chi character. He truly was strong, and would be a very formidable opponent, especially since Lin Ming wasn't in his top condition.

Then Lin Ming was surprised as he saw Xiao Chi take out a long spear from his spatial ring. The spear shaft was a deep gold, nine feet long, with another nine inch long spearhead. Lin Ming's eyes brightened.

Xiao Chi actually used a spear?

As Lin Ming and Xiao Chi stood across each other on the stage, within the Thundercrest section of the banquet, a pale youth was sitting, his hands folded against his chest. He had a hint of a smile on his face, and between his eyebrows was a light ivory mark.

“Limitless, why are you smiling?” Zhou Lie frowned. He didn't like this mysterious and powerful junior-apprentice brother. Whenever he smiled, Zhou lie could feel that there was a sinister and dark intent behind it.

“Hehe... I just had a sudden idea. I was wondering if I could be like Lin Ming, and challenge all the masters of the South Horizon

Region including Divine Phoenix Island. How would that be like?”

“You want to challenge the geniuses of the South Horizon Region?” Zhou Lie didn’t think much of this, but Lei Jingtian was actually surprised. “What for?”

The pale youth traced his chin. He watched Mu Qianyu from afar, darkly saying, “I just remembered a legend about Divine Phoenix Island’s Saintess. It’s quite interesting...”

Chapter 374 – Metal Essence

The pale youth traced his chin. He watched Mu Qianyu from afar, darkly saying, “I just remembered a legend about Divine Phoenix Island’s Saintess. It’s quite interesting...”

“Legend of the Saintess? What legend?” Lei Jingtian seemed to remember something, but he wasn’t sure of himself.

Zhou Lie’s ears pricked up to listen. But what happened next left him speechless. His junior-apprentice brother bluntly said, “I saw some ancient texts that were found within the South Sea about Divine Phoenix Island. The legend was...”

As he spoke to here, the conversation immediately switched to true essence sound transmission.

This caused Zhou Lie to be extremely morose. He had been suffering because of this fellow recently, it was like he was acting against him.

This pale fellow was truly abhorrent.

He didn’t know what was going on. It seemed as if this punk knew many matters about many things. Zhou Lie simply didn’t know where he had read and heard about so many events.

As Zhou Lie was daydreaming, the pale youth finished speaking. Lei Jingtian rubbed his chin, deep in thought.

Then, the pale youth said to Zhou Lie, “Go challenge Lin Ming afterwards. If Mu Dingshan or Mu Xiaoqing come up, I’ll deal with them. It’s enough for you to fight Lin Ming.”

This command made Zhou Lie very uncomfortable.

He really didn’t want to answer him, but apparently this was also the intent of his master, so he could only agree.

At this moment, onstage, Lin Ming looked at the long spear in Xiao Chi’s hand. He had used the Heavy Profound Soft Spear for a long time, so he was able to determine that the spear in Xiao Chi’s hand was nine feet nine inches, the exact same as the Heavy Profound Soft Spear.

This spear was an entirely gold color all over, he had no idea what material the spear shaft was made of. It was like metal, but it was also very flexible. Lin Ming saw Xiao Chi shake his spear, and the spear trembled, creating a large flowery image. This spear’s elastic properties were much better than the Heavy Profound Soft Spear’s.

This was a low-grade earth-step treasure spear. No... perhaps it was even a medium-grade earth-step treasure spear.

Lin Ming was surprised to discover that he wasn’t able to actually determine the grade of this spear.

He suspected that it was a medium-grade earth-step flexible spear. But to forge such a high grade flexible spear from metal was not something an ordinary refining master could do!

Xiao Chi noticed the look in Lin Ming's eyes, he was very familiar with this look. When a martial artist saw a weapon that they liked, they would often reveal this expression. He smiled as he said, "Lin Ming, are you sure that you want to use that Heavy Profound Soft Spear? I noticed that in every match you've had to separate some of your true essence to protect your spear, causing your combat strength to be reduced. If you like, I can lend you a spear."

With Xiao Chi's eyesight, he was naturally able to see what material Lin Ming's spear was made from. It was Heavy Profound Soft Silver. To mortals, this was a rare and priceless material. But in a large sect, it was no different than common iron.

Lin Ming's eyebrows rose, "You have many earth-step treasure spears?"

Xiao Chi smiled. "Correct. My Golden Bell Mountain is the greatest refiner faction within the entire Five Element Region. Within the entire area of several million miles, the best refining masters are all located within my Golden Bell Mountain. Especially spear refining masters – there are countless numbers of them at Golden Bell Mountain, and that is because the main weapon of my Golden Bell Mountain is the spear!

Lin Ming's eyes shined; a sect whose main weapon was the spear!

“Spear, pikes, halberds, lances... the most charming of these is of course the spear. The spear is the king of 100 soldiers! And the best spear refining masters are those Revolving Core masters who are proficient with metal origin energy, and have also comprehended the Concept of Metal. Only then can one create the best possible flexible spear!”

Lin Ming took a deep breath. Concept of Metal! To create a spear using the Concept of Metal, just what kind of approach was this?

Of the Five Element Region’s seven great sects, each sect was extremely proficient in their correlated elements, and also had an extremely high comprehension of that element’s Concept. The Concept of Metal, in addition to the top metal materials of Golden Bell Mountain, could allow an originally hard metal to turn into soft and flexible steel! Perhaps this level of skill could only be achieved once one understood the Concept of Metal and also comprehended the Laws that governed the structure of metal.

In addition, they were all metal-attribute martial artists. The quality of the spears they forged could be imagined!

‘This world truly has capable geniuses being born every moment. How laughable that I used to think that metal could never be used to create a top quality spear. It seems that I was nothing but a frog in a well. If there was really a Peerless Emperor refining master, even creating a heaven-step flexible treasure spear from metal might not be too difficult.’

As Lin Ming thought this, he radiantly smiled and said, “Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao, we shall be friends over wine, but

opponents on the field. Today on this stage I have continuously defeated four opponents! However, this match with you is the one that I am most looking forward to! I'll be honest with Brother Xiao. Before now, I have never fought against an opponent that used a spear!"

"Haha, I just happen to be the opposite. Ever since I was child, all of the martial artists around me used spears. I only practiced spear play, and only looked at pictures of spears. But even though I've done so for 20 years, I still haven't had enough! Junior-apprentice Brother Lin spoke well. The chance for me to fight you in a fair match is extremely rare. Without accident, I won't have an opportunity to fight Junior-apprentice Brother Lin again in the future. In this match, I will also put forth everything I have!"

As Xiao Chi spoke, he lifted his right hand, a golden light flashing in his palm. A moment later, that golden light condensed into a golden metallic liquid, as if it were liquid gold.

"Mm?" Lin Ming probed with his sense, and was able to feel an extremely pure and strong metal origin energy coming from that golden liquid.

"Metal Essence! It is the same as a Flame Essence, a spiritual existence of the world. This Metal Essence is bred from within heavenly materials or at least earth-step treasures. After all sorts of rigorous and difficult conditions are met, it will finally be born if there is a heaven-defying lucky coincidence. If I relied on this Metal Essence, I could use it to create my life's treasure weapon. Of course, I don't have this ability, but it is still a possibility..."

Xiao Chi placed the Metal Essence in his palm on the spear shaft. Then, an incredible scene took place. The Metal Essence seemed to be alive as it spread along the spear. A moment later, the entire spear was covered; the Metal Essence had even seeped within! After that, Xiao Chi's spear was officially upgraded to a medium-grade earth-step treasure!

Not only that, but it was a top medium-grade earth-step treasure! Lin Ming was shocked. Metal Essence could actually enhance a treasure by a single grade?

It had to be known that a medium-grade earth-step treasure was able to tempt the heart of Revolving Core powerhouses. As for a high-grade earth-step treasure, that was enough to cause Revolving Core masters to go into a maddened frenzy.

Flame Essence, Metal Essence, Water Essence and so on... along with Wind Souls and Thunder Souls, each and every kind of these spiritual existences that their own unique functions. The strange and magical things of this world could always cause one to fill with a sense of astonishment, novelty, and shock.

If... he could obtain his own Metal Essence and fuse it into the Purple Comet Spear with a special technique, just what would happen then?

Could his Purple Comet spear become a heaven-step treasure?

Thinking this, Lin Ming was at first excited, then he immediately shook his head, ruefully smiling. Heaven-step treasures were

mostly weapons that only a Peerless Emperor could qualify to use. If he wanted to have his Purple Comet Spear become a heaven-step treasure, he would most likely need a similar heaven-step Metal Essence. This was no easy matter at all.

However, even if he had a low grade Metal Essence to use, it would still be able to greatly improve the quality of the Purple Comet Spear.

The majority of the Purple Comet Spear's weight was concentrated in the spearhead. The spear shaft itself was too light. Not only that, but the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo also lacked a sense of texture; there were many faults that could be found within this spear.

“Lin Ming, let me ask you again, are you sure you want to use that Heavy Profound Soft Spear? I can lend you a low-grade earth-step treasure spear. Although the quality might be too great, at least it will still be better than your spear by a great margin.”

Xiao Chi asked again. He had a magnanimous and generous disposition, truly a man worth knowing. He did not take advantage of someone when they were in a helpless situation, and had the aura of a true gentleman.

However, the Five Element Region disciples weren't feeling too well about Xiao Chi's actions.

Of course, because it was Xiao Chi, no one dared to loudly oppose him. They could only privately whisper to each other.

“Is there a mistake? He wants to lend this fellow a spear?”

“He’s already running so rampant with such a garbage spear. Just what will happen if he has a better spear? Isn’t Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao just shooting us in the feet?”

“These Divine Phoenix Island bugs obviously have no one capable of forging spears. But what would happen if they learn how to forge spears from Golden Bell Mountain’s spears?”

“Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao is too reckless. How can he give someone like this away?”

Although this Five Element Region disciples spoke in hushed tones, Lin Ming had extremely good hearing, and was able to listen to everything with extreme clarity.

Lin Ming simply didn’t care for this nonsense talk. He cupped his hands across his chest, bowing to Xiao Chi as he said, “Before now, the four opponents that I continuously defeated were either scum or villains. When I first met Brother Xiao, I felt like I was meeting up with an old friend. Good friends drink wine together. Naturally, the best wine and the best wares must be brought out. Only then can a truly hearty time be had. Since we are facing against each other, I will not be stingy in my actions.”

As Lin Ming spoke, he put away the Heavy Profound Soft Spear, and slowly extracted the Purple Comet Spear from his spatial ring.

Xiao Chi was a man who truly understood the spear. Lin Ming would need him to appraise this spear; how to join a Metal Essence to it, and just what type of Metal Essence would be the best.

And another reason that Lin Ming had taken out his Purple Comet Spear was to fight in his top condition, and use this match to increase his own understanding of spear techniques. Until now, his spear skills were limited to the Foundation Spear Technique.

Golden Bell Mountain had thousands of years of accumulated spear techniques. Towards such a heritage, Lin Ming naturally had an extremely vibrant yearning.

The Purple Comet Spear appeared, a purple light radiating outwards.

Within the deep purple spear shaft, one could faintly see nine bamboo nodes. Between the deep purple, there were also countless dense red lines, just like blood vessels that ran through it. This was what was left behind from the Sacred Flame Parasol Tree after it was blended into the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo.

The spearhead was eight inches long with a high ridge and thin edge, and an icy cold emitting from it. It was forged from the fusion of Profound Thunder Stone, crystallized Vermillion Bird flames, and Purple Comet. All of these materials were priceless treasures.

Lin Ming hadn't infused the spear with true essence, but the

entire spear shined with a faint touch of thunder and fire, causing the air around it to slightly tremble. It was like an unrivaled divine weapon had appeared, slaughtering the world.

Seeing this dazzling spear light, Xiao Chi suddenly froze, his heart full of wonder. This spear was actually a top high-grade earth-step treasure!

“The spearhead is made from Purple Comet? But also Purple Comet that was refined?” Xiao Chi found this hard to believe. Purple Comet was a top quality metal that was good enough to create a heaven-step treasure. Besides his Golden Bell Mountain, there were actually others capable of refining Purple Comet?

He didn't know what material the spear shaft was made from, but looking at the vast inherent power of thunder and fire, it was an inestimable top quality material. Lin Ming just happened to have a dual thunder and fire attribute body; could this treasure spear possibly have been especially forged for his unique body?

Thinking this, Xiao Chi gasped. Just who had forged this spear?

Everyone present naturally had an extraordinary breadth of experience. When Lin Ming took out the Purple Comet Spear, it instantly became the focus of the audience.

This was a top high-grade earth-step treasure spear! It was something that even Revolving Core masters would go crazy with jealousy over!

Chapter 375 – Spear Potential

A Five Element Region disciple was already hypothesizing, “If I’m not wrong, that’s a high-grade earth-step treasure. Not only that, but at the top of its level!”

“How could this weapon be given to a little Pulse Condensation boy to use? This is a weapon that an almighty Revolving Core elder should use. In fact, not every Revolving Core master would be able to have one!”

“The spearhead is made of Purple Comet, but what is the spear shaft made from? Why does it contain such strong thunder and fire origin energy?”

“The spear shaft is Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo, and it looks no less than 10,000 years old! Profound Thunder Stone is also fused into the spearhead!” This was said by some Thundercrest Sect disciples. They were very familiar with all sorts of mystical thunder-attribute materials. Naturally, they understood what it was.

“Not only is there Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo, but there is also Sacred Flame Parasol Tree within it; it too looks no less than 10,000 years old. It’s divided into threads and integrated into the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo!” The one who spoke was a Sunfire Sect disciple. In terms of their understanding of fire-attribute wood materials, their understanding even went beyond Divine Phoenix Island’s.

“The spearhead also has crystallized Vermilion Bird flame!”

There were many experts present that had a great knowledge of thunder and fire-attribute materials. Also, since Lin Ming knew that he would be exposing this spear in battle soon, he didn't activate the array formation that Ancestor Chi Yan had left behind to conceal the spear. Thus, after just a short period of time, the audience was able to decipher every material that was used to forge the Purple Comet Spear!

Refined Purple Comet, Profound Thunder Stone, 10,000 year old Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo, 10,000 year old Sacred Flame Parasol Tree, crystallized Vermillion Bird Flame Essence. Of these materials, any one of them would be top quality materials. It was rare enough that everyone stood dumbfounded, staring in shock.

With so many precious and rare materials gathered together, in addition to it being forged by a top refining master, the quality of this spear almost caught up to a heaven-step treasure!

With such a treasure in front of them, many Revolving Core masters couldn't remain calm. In the Golden Bell Mountain banquet area, two elders looked at this spear, an amazing look of acclaim on their faces.

“In the path of refining, there are many roads. My Golden Bell Mountain understands metal refining to an exquisite degree, but we are lacking in those that can refine wood. The method in which this Purple Comet was refined is truly amazing!”

“Yes, the keen sharpness of this spear cannot match with the treasures that my Golden Bell Mountain refines, but in terms of increasing the power of elemental attribute true essence, my Golden Bell Mountain is far inferior.”

The two Golden Bell Mountain elders were extremely modest. Since ancient times, Golden Bell Mountain had always been a very low key sect that stayed out of most affairs. As a sect, they were usually refining various treasures in seclusion. In fact, their chief disciple had the least significant reputation out of all the other chief disciples in the Five Element Region.

As for the Divine Phoenix Island banquet area, most disciples were excitedly talking. They were naturally able to recognize the crystallized Vermillion Bird flame and Sacred Flame Parasol Tree. These were all treasures of Divine Phoenix Island.

Yan Fuhong’s face had sunk until water was coming out. The crystallized Vermillion Bird flame and Sacred Flame Parasol Tree were extremely valuable and precious resources even within Divine Phoenix Island. Yet, this was all given to a stranger. How could he not be jealous?

“Damn it all! I had applied for some crystallized Vermillion Bird flame so that I could use it to cultivate the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, and I wasn’t able to obtain any. Yet now, this was all given to some boy so that he could use it to forge a spear!”

Yu Fuhong grit his teeth. Because he saw that Lin Ming was too strong, he had already lost all desire to oppose him. But now that

he saw the difference in their treatment was so great, the simmering embers of his jealousy blew up, he couldn't even suppress it anymore.

“Good spear! It seems that we can have a hearty fight!” Xiao Chi laughed. He had offered to lend Lin Ming a low-grade earth-step spear, but now he saw that the spear Lin Ming had was no worse than a spear that a Golden Bell Mountain elder would use. It seemed that his worries were unfounded.

“Take my spear, Supreme Energy Becomes One!”

Xiao Chi's kind eyes suddenly became fierce and wild. He suddenly grabbed his spear and thrust forwards. The long spear was like a golden beam of lightning, roaring as it stabbed towards Lin Ming. The surrounding air began to rumble, sending out howling sounds.

This spear seemed solid and unhurried, but in a split-second it had already rushed to Lin Ming.

Lin Ming's eyes flashed. This was pure spear play. In a normal situation, if someone sent out such an attack, he would have used the Golden Roc Shattering the Void movement technique to dodge. But now, he didn't want to hide from this move.

Flood Dragon Goes to Sea!

Lin Ming thrust out his spear. This spear contained no power of

thunder or fire, and it didn't have any vibrating strength; this was only the most common of spear moves.

He wanted to use this opportunity to sharpen his spear skills. Compared to Xiao Chi's spear skills, Lin Ming's spear skills were beyond clumsy! He had taken the 'Foundation Spear Technique' as the foundation of his spear skills, but this so-called Flood Dragon Goes to Sea was what most mortal armies used for training. It was also the most common foundation spear move that a soldier would learn.

Peng!

As the two spears crossed, in that instant Lin Ming was able to hear the sound of metal screeching in his ears. Xiao Chi's spear contained a very strange energy. As soon as his Purple Comet Spear was touch, it was like an earthquake had struck it apart. Xiao Chi's spear curved along the Purple Comet Spear. It seemed to have intelligence as it climbed the spear shaft of the Purple Comet Spear, like a snake crawling a tree, thrusting towards Lin Ming's throat.

“This spear skill!”

Lin Ming was surprised. His toes pushed the ground; Golden Rock Shattering the Void!

Lin Ming's figure drew back, and he was just able to avoid the danger of this spear. The spear wind had blown against his bodily true essence, and Lin Ming could clearly hear the piercing 'chi chi'

sound of his true essence being scratched apart.

‘Good spear skill!’

Lin Ming was shocked. If this had only been a contest of spear skills, he would have already lost!

With Golden Bell Mountain’s thousands of years of heritage and accumulated spear skills, the popular and common ‘Foundation Spear Technique’ simply could not compare at all.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao lives up to his fame! Well done!”

The Five Element Region disciples had been too ruthlessly suppressed by Lin Ming. As a single man, he had blocked their path. Out of the dozens of them, none of them had dared to challenge him. The shame and aggrievement that came from such an awkward situation could be imagined.

Thus, as Xiao Chi gained the upper hand in this first move, these disciples began to crazily cheer.

Xiao Chi frowned. He ignored these people, and looked at Lin Ming with a puzzled expression, “What spear skills does Junior-apprentice Brother Lin use?”

“Foundation Spear Technique.” Lin Ming casually said.

“What?” Xiao Chi was stunned.

It wasn't only Xiao Chi, but the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island were shocked too. Even the Five Element disciples that were waiting for Lin Ming to be defeated were the same.

Foundation Spear Technique?

In the Five Element Region, there were also similar things such as the Foundation Spear Technique, Foundation Saber Law, and other such manuals. But, cultivation methods at this level didn't even have a formal name. They weren't even able to pass the threshold for basic entry.

What Lin Ming cultivated was actually the Foundation Spear Technique?

“Is this boy messing around?” The first reaction of most people was to not believe this. But, as they thought more about it, they realized that Lin Ming's spear skills truly weren't worth much. Basically they were simple stabs, chops, cuts, waves, and other such basic moves.

The reason that he was able to defeat his opponents wasn't because of his spear moves but because of his thick true essence, the power of his thunder and fire, as well as his terrifying attack power.

“Maybe this boy studies a top grade Foundation Spear

Technique!” After some people thought about it, they came to this conclusion.

“A month staff, a year fist, and even longer for the spear. This spear is extremely difficult to practice. It turns out this boy is only a simpleton, he’s just acting with this spear.”

Some people were immediately happy. They would never give up any chance to belittle Lin Ming. This was their psychological issue. Although they knew that Lin Ming was a ridiculously powerful individual, they still wouldn’t admit this. They would only look for more chances to discredit and dismiss him.

“He doesn’t know any spear moves, but still uses a spear. That is a top high-grade earth-step treasure spear you know! What a waste of a treasure!”

Xiao Chi remained silent. In fact, in his heart, he also felt that this high-grade earth-step Purple Comet Spear was a bit wasted on Lin Ming. This sort of spear was a weapon that would need a Revolving Core master to display its true strength.

He said, “Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, you seem to have this idea to fight me with spear play. But if you can only use the Foundation Spear Technique, it’s impossible for you to defeat me.”

Lin Ming said, “In my match with Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao, if I rely on my thunder and fire true essence to win, this fight no longer has any meaning to me.”

Xiao Chi's eyebrows curved up, he was provoked by Lin Ming's competitive spirit. "You want to depend on just your spear skills to compete with me?"

"Unless I'm forced otherwise." Lin Ming still gave himself a way out. This so-called spear play included spear skills as well as using one's true essence to display these abilities.

If he didn't use martial skills, Flow like Silk, thunder and fire true essence, his Thunder Soul and Flame Essence, cutting away all of these abilities, then Lin Ming would hardly have anything left. He would only have the simplest of spear skills, and his combat strength would be greatly reduced. Much less that he wasn't in the best condition, nor did he know where Xiao Chi's bottom line was, so he didn't act tough.

Lin Ming's words immediately caused a stir in the audience.

"Lin Ming wants to use the Foundation Spear Technique to fight against the accumulated thousands of years of spear play knowledge of Golden Bell Mountain? Lin Ming is mad!"

"It's just an act. Didn't you hear him say that he would use it 'unless forced'? I wonder just how many moves he'll be able to last until he's 'forced', and then will have to use Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky or something else." A Five Element Region disciple curled his lips in disdain, obviously not believing Lin Ming's boastful claims.

Even the Divine Phoenix Island disciples that had always had

faith in Lin Ming weren't sure. Lin Ming was strong, but in terms of spear play, how could he compare with Golden Bell Mountain?

“This Lin Ming, what kind of devilish plan does he have up his sleeve?” A Golden Bell Mountain elder furrowed his eyebrows. He didn't think that Lin Ming's spear play would be able to compare with Xiao Chi's. If Lin Ming had hastily uttered these words without having some chance of winning, and then was forced to use the power of thunder and fire within a move or two, that would truly be laughable.

“If I'm not wrong, then Lin Ming wants to exchange blows with Chi'er to spur his limits and make up for his shortcomings in spear play. The reason that he participated in this banquet competition wasn't to win, but to hone his strength.” Another Golden Bell Mountain elder slowly said.

A fight was always the best way to hone one's strength. There were many talents keen on learning from their challenges. In his view, Lin Ming was such a person.

“Interesting. The idea is good, but if he's only going to use pure spear play, I wonder just how long he'll be able to last.” The Golden Bell Mountain elder began to sound very interested in what was about to happen.

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“Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, spear skills are difficult to learn and even harder to master. Divine Phoenix Island has no heritage

of spear skills. If you blindly practice spear skills on a whim, you will only end up harming yourself.” In Xiao Chi’s opinion, the reason that Lin Ming hadn’t practiced spear skills was because Divine Phoenix Island mostly used swords. Perhaps even when Lin Ming was choosing a weapon, he had gone stupid for a moment and thought that since a spear dance was quite beautiful, he would choose a spear.

“Since you insist, take my spear!” The golden spear in Xiao Chi’s hand stabbed out. His momentum suddenly rocketed to the sky. With a slide of his hand, the spear shaft slid out too. His hand slapped the spear shaft, and the entire spear moved like it was intelligent, waving around like a venomous serpent.

This spear in Xiao Chi’s seemed to have its own consciousness. It could actively attack the enemy’s weaknesses, it was very difficult to dodge.

“How will he defend against his?”

Whether it was a disciple of Divine Phoenix Island or the Five Element Region, they all rubbed their eyes, waiting for Lin Ming to make a move with his spear. If he didn’t use thunder and fire true essence, and only used the Foundation Spear Technique moves, defending against this spear would be beyond difficult!

Spear wind howled, spear light dazzled.

Facing this flurry of golden snakes from the spear, Lin Ming’s pupils contracted. The true essence within his body erupted to the

limit, and his bones began to emit a popping sound. Behind Lin Ming, an azure True Dragon's phantom appeared, clawing out. It was condensed to the point of seeming solid and lifelike. If one looked carefully, they could even see the flashing azure dragon scales!

A clarion dragon roar burst forth from Lin Ming's body. The resonant dragon roar was loud and clear, slamming into the heavens, washing away all the cloud in the sky.

Long spear manifesting dragon!

Lin Ming's spear skills naturally had no area worthy of notice. It could even be said to be very clumsy and rough. But ever since he had absorbed the blood of the True Dragon, as soon as Lin Ming struck out, the bloodline of the True Dragon within him would animate, bringing forth the potential of rivers and mountains, containing the majestic prestige of a dragon that echoed between the heavens and earth!

This was strength that originated from his bloodline!

Seeing Lin Ming make this spear move, Xiao Chi was stunned. But the spears were too fast, and he couldn't respond; the two spears collided.

Bang!

It was like an Azure Dragon and golden snake had smashed into

each other. A shockwave of azure true essence surged out, turning into hundreds of faint Azure Dragon phantoms, scattering in all directions!

The strange power that was contained with Xiao Chi's golden spear was actually lost within the vast sea of spear potential.

Xiao Chi rapidly drew back, retreating dozens of feet. As for Lin Ming, he drawn back dozens of steps. In this one move, they had actually achieved parity!

Xiao Chi looked at Lin Ming with incredulous disbelief in his heart, an inexplicable feeling of horror blossoming within him.

It wasn't only Xiao Chi that was stunned, but everyone present was speechless. Lin Ming's 'potential' had actually reached such a level.

The so-called 'spear potential' or 'sword intent' referred to the inherent soul that was contained within a spear or sword. A martial artist that fought with spears or swords would normally only use the shape of the weapon itself to attack. But a true master could integrate the soul of the weapon into their moves.

As the saying went, saber like tiger, spear like dragon. A good spear was similar to a True Dragon. Its soul was also the soul of a dragon.

At Lin Ming's young age, he had already achieved spear like

dragon. The inherent dragon prestige within the spear was already thick to the point that it was able to manifest a True Dragon phantom behind him. This was a talent that defied the heavens!

If the advantage in Xiao Chi's spear skills hadn't been so great, that spear might have injured him a moment ago, and result wouldn't have been evenly matched.

Mu Yuhuang breathed a light breath. She recalled the power and majesty of the spear move a moment ago. Behind Lin Ming, the phantom of a True Dragon had appeared. The roar of a dragon had even pierced through the heavens.

Long spear manifesting dragon...?

No, it shouldn't be...

Whether it was the dragon roar or the Azure Dragon phantom, they hadn't been caused by Lin Ming's spear potential.

No, just the opposite. The dragon roar and Azure Dragon phantom were the reason for Lin Ming's spear potential. This was why his spear power was like tsunamis and landslides, a dragon soaring through the nine heavens.

The reason that Mu Yuhuang was so sure was that during that moment when the dragon roar had pierced through the skies, she could clearly feel the Vermillion Bird bloodline within her body shivering, a faint feeling of fear that suppressed her bloodline into

submission!

“Yu’er, you said before that Lin Ming might have some strange Flood Dragon bloodline within him?” Mu Yuhuang slowly asked with a true essence sound transmission.

If she wasn’t wrong, then this was Lin Ming’s lucky opportunity. By relying on ‘it’, he was also able to absorb the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder...

Chapter 376 – Pale Youth

With a mere Bone Forging stage cultivation, Lin Ming had been able to absorb the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder that only a middle Xiantian master should have been able to. If there wasn't any secret within Lin Ming's body, Mu Yuhuang would never have been able to believe this. But, if Lin Ming's bloodline was used as the explanation, she could reluctantly come to terms with it.

After all, the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder contained the brutal will of a Flood Dragon. If it was to encounter a more formidable and ancient bloodline, this Flood Dragon bloodline would be awed into submission. With Yu'er's help, this could also explain how Lin Ming was able to absorb it.

Mu Qianyu nodded, saying, "This is also the first time disciple has seen the phantom behind Lin Ming. When Senior-apprentice Sister Qinghong returned from the Seven profound Valleys, she described to me what she had seen. It was probably a similar scene... disciple believes that this is an ancient noble bloodline similar to my Divine Phoenix Island's that Lin Ming managed to obtain through some lucky chance."

As for Lin Ming's life and background, they had already been clearly researched by Divine Phoenix Island. The common people of Sky Fortune Kingdom had been mortals for generations, it was impossible for Lin Ming to have this kind of bloodline from his family. Thus, the only other reason was that the heavens had gifted him a lucky miracle.

"Ancient noble bloodline?" Mu Yuhuang hesitated. Perhaps

matters weren't so simple. Just what sort of ancient noble bloodline could cause even the Vermillion Bird bloodline within her to shiver in fear?

Could it be a God Beast?

Mu Yuhuang dared not believe this. A God Beast did not exist in the Sky Spill Continent. It was said that above the Sky Spill Continent was the Realm of the Gods. But, even within the Realm of the Gods, a God Beast was an extremely rare existence. Where did Lin Ming find the blood essence of a God Beast to transplant into his bloodline?

Even if he had gotten that far, how could a mere Bone Forging boy have absorbed such a bloodline?

In any case, it was true that Lin Ming had a secret bloodline within him, and that this bloodline had an extraordinary origin.

However, Mu Yuhuang didn't wish to pry into his secrets. In truth, lucky chances were also a part of one's destiny. A great lucky chance came with a correspondingly great destiny. Destiny was the essential truth that an unrivaled talent needed to become a Peerless Emperor. Ever since ancient times, the birth of Peerless Emperors usually resulted from the accumulated destiny of a character that stood at the pinnacle.

If one didn't have such a destiny but still coveted these things, they would instead attract an unexpected catastrophe upon themselves. History had proven this point again and again

throughout the annals of time. These so-called unlucky calamitous treasures were often priceless. However, what was strange was that if one obtained it, they would die as if they had been struck by a curse. If one didn't have a great destiny as if they were the protagonist of the world, they would not be able to gather such treasures to them.

In order to birth a genius that would become a Peerless Emperor, perhaps not even Divine Phoenix Island had such a destiny. Much less, Mu Yuhuang was just an old lady with a few hundred years of life left in her. This sort of calamitous treasure was not something she would be able to afford. Even if she managed to peacefully obtain it without accident, with her age, it was basically useless.

What Mu Yuhuang most wanted to see now was only that her Divine Phoenix Island would be able to enter an age of prosperity.

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On the martial arts stage, Lin Ming and Xiao Chi fought once more. Both spears clashed. One side was a spear skill genius of Golden Bell Mountain whose every move contained profound principles. But as for the other side, he had a deep comprehension of spear potential. Although his spear skills were simple and lacking, every spear was like a landslide, every spear was like a tsunami, every spear contained the power of endless mountains and rivers. These two were well matched against each other.

Clang clang clang clang clang!

With every strike, a violently raging true essence shockwave erupted, an azure color mixing with a golden color, causing the ground itself to shake. Because of the intense shockwaves in the air, the audience that witnessed this battle scene seemed to be watching it under the twisted ripples of water.

Every spear that Lin Ming thrust out contained an enormous pressure. Even though Xiao Chi's spear contained a strange power, it was actually forcefully dissolved by Lin Ming's strength.

The two youths fought for several dozen moves. Lin Ming had consumed a great deal of true essence, but so had Xiao Chi.

This battle was the longest that Lin Ming had ever fought.

With his strength, he could simply have used the Thunder Soul and won with overwhelming force. But, he did not do this.

He needed this battle to see what degree of skill one's spear play could reach.

Xiao Chi turned, thrusting out his spear. Although this spear skill looked very slow, in just a split-second the spearpoint would instantly arrive in front of you. This sort of strange and confusing spatial skill was nearly impossible to defend against.

Pah!

Even Lin Ming was unable to completely dodge the spear with

such a confusing spatial skill. The spearpoint rubbed against Lin Ming's bodily true essence, and with a ripping sound, an incomparably sharp golden spear had pierced through Lin Ming's bodily true essence, taking just a touch of blood.

“Mm?”

Xiao Chi was surprised. What was going on? In that attack, he had felt like his spear had stabbed into iron, it simply hadn't been able to do much damage.

But at the same time, Lin Ming's spear came smashing down like an avalanche!

Xiao Chi quickly lifted his spear to block.

Clang!

As soon as this blow smashed down, the golden spear in Xiao Chi's hand curved into a crescent moon. He staggered back, every step creating a deep imprint in the ground. The tiles of the stage that were supported by an array formation were broken by the pressure of his feet, cracks littering the stage.

After retreated 70 to 80 feet, Xiao Chi finally came to a stop. He felt like his right arm was numb, and even his fingers were shaking.

“What a terrifying strength and spear potential!”

Although he managed to block that last attack, he felt the blood within his body roiling and his meridians in crazy disorder.

In the audience, the Golden Bell Mountain elder gasped. “What a terrifying boy. Chi’er used a special technique to unload the force on his body. Lin Ming’s strength and spear potential that he unleashed poured along Chi’er’s muscles and skeleton, entering the ground through his feet. Even though he had let so much strength pass through him, he was still wounded. The power of this spear potential is simply like having a mountain fall on you.”

“Indeed... this boy is truly a spear genius. But it’s such a pity that he doesn’t have a great master that can teach him spear skills. If all he learns is some Foundation Spear Technique skills, then it is truly wasteful...” Another Golden Bell Mountain elder said with some regret, obviously sad that Lin Ming hadn’t joined his Golden Ball Mountain.

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“Haha, what a great fight!” Xiao Chi suddenly put away his spear. His entire forehead was covered with sweat, and his face was flushed red. Blood was surging within his body, and he had obviously consumed a great deal of strength.

“Same here.”

Lin Ming was also panting for breath. After several continuous battles, even with pills to supplement him, he had consumed over

70% of his true essence. Not only that, but within the true essence of his body, there were many complex and strange factors. Lin Ming's current combat strength was less than half of his optimal condition.

“You're just a monster. You fought through five straight fierce matches and yet you can still fight to this degree and have energy left over. I admit defeat.” Xiao Chi sighed, lamenting the result. He had been evenly matched with Lin Ming, but it turned out that Lin Ming's endurance was much greater than his. If they continued, his defeat was simply a matter of time.

“Well fought.” Lin Ming cupped his hands together and bowed. During this match against Xiao Chi, he had learned many things and gained many insights. It seemed that he really needed to look for a spear art manual in order to make up for his deficiencies there.

After Xiao Chi admitted defeat on his own, the entire audience was silent. The strongest direct disciple under the six great chief disciples had actually lost.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao was defeated...”

Even the Five Element Region disciples that were desperately cheering for Xiao Chi were unable to accept this. The truth was, when Lin Ming hadn't used this power of thunder and fire, yet was still able to fight evenly with Xiao Chi using just his spear play, they had already foreseen the ending that Xiao Chi would lose. It was just that they weren't willing to accept this truth.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao lost. Above Xiao Chi, there are only the six great direct disciples...”

Although everyone knew that Lin Ming was already spent of all energy, there was no direct disciples that went onstage to challenge him. Lin Ming’s winning streak had left them breathless, and no one had the courage or qualifications to challenge him.

Lin Ming swallowed a pill and propped himself up on the stage using his spear. This time, he did not challenge anyone to battle. He was well aware that if he fought again, it would be against a chief disciple.

Six great chief disciples... it was unknown just how many he could fight.

Lin Ming turned to look at Mu Dingshan and saw that he was preparing. Next would be a contest between chief disciples!

“Dingshan, Xiaoqing, if you fight, try to delay as much as possible so that Lin Ming can have more time to recover.” Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing simultaneously heard the true essence sound transmission of old lady Yuhuang.

“Yes, Honorable Sect Master.”

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Within the Thundercrest Sect banquet area, the pale youth glanced at Zhou Lie, ordering him to go onstage. “You challenge Lin Ming to draw out Mu Dingshan, I’ll help you take him!”

The pale youth tersely said.

Zhou Lie frowned. He absolutely did not wish to do something so insidious like taking advantage of someone while they were in a vulnerable situation. This was not how a true gentleman acted. With such a large audience present, he couldn’t afford to lose.

“Hehe, what’s the matter? You think you’re taking advantage of someone while they’re down? Alright, we’ll take a break and look for another reason when they lose.”

The pale youth casually spoke, his words carrying an imperious tone that made Zhou Lie feel uneasy.

‘This fellow seems very keen on what he said before, and wants to challenge the direct disciples of Divine Phoenix Island by himself. What does he want from all this?’ Zhou Lie thought, baffled.

At this moment, the pale youth used a true essence sound transmission to communicate with Lei Jingtian. Then, Lei Jingtian stood up and smiled, “High Master Yuhuang, your great island’s Lin Ming is truly a hero that from among the young. However, after he competed against five masters from my Five Element Region, it seems that he has already exhausted himself. How about we have a truce and take a break so that Lin Ming can rest.

Afterwards will be the final competition between chief disciples. How about it?”

“Mm? Mu Yuhuang’s willowy eyebrows rose. This fellow, just what did this little weasel want? What was he thinking about? He actually offered to call a momentary truce?

It had to be known that Lin Ming had consumed too much energy. Even if Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing were able to delay for a few matches so that Lin Ming could rest, he still wouldn’t be able to fully recover in this short time.

After Lei Jingtian spoke, he sat down with a cheerful laugh before waiting for Mu Yuhuang’s answer.

Zhou Lie was confused, just who was this pale youth? It seemed that his master seemed to care about his opinion a great deal.

‘This fellow is shrouded in mystery, he’s just like a frosty snake! Master said that he was a Saint rank talent that he found in the northern domains, but I always felt that this explanation was too farfetched. His martial talent is surprisingly good and he also understands many different cultivation methods. His cultivation is only at the early Houtian realm, yet he can easily defeat me! Not only that, but he seems to know some secrets about Sky Spill Continent, such as the legends of the Saintess...’

There was definitely a problem with this man!

Just who was he?

For some time, Zhou Lie even suspected that the pale fellow was possessed by some ancient monster. Of course, this was something that only existed in fantasy novels; he had no idea if things like possession existed.

As Zhou Lie was daydreaming, Lei Jingtian was exchanging a true essence sound transmission with the pale youth. “We’ll follow everything as you planned. Events should progress smoothly...”

“Mm, very good!”

Chapter 377 – Demon Region's Saint Son

The interim break was decided to be two hours. Onstage, a thick and tall incense was placed as a timer.

Lei Jingtian sat in his chair, his eyes closed in contemplation. Zhou Lie sat beside him, sullenly watching the pale youth, seeing him on the other side of the banquet table, a 100 year old pot of excellent wine in one hand and a jade cup in the other, freely drinking.

“Xiaoling, who do you think that Lei Mubai fellow is?” Zhou Lie had a deep sense of suspicion in his heart that had weighed on him for too long and he couldn't help but ask his little sister.

“Huh? What person?” Zhou Xiaoling looked bewildered as she picked up a spirit fruit and bit into it. “Isn't Senior-apprentice Brother Lei a Saint rank talent that Master found from the northern domains? Hehe, speaking of which, our Five Element Region hasn't had a Saint rank talent for the last few hundred years. This time the six other sects will truly be scared silly. I can't wait to see their stunned expressions, how funny would they be?”

Zhou Lie frowned, thinking something just didn't seem right. Zhou Xiaoling continued to proudly say, “Big Brother, you don't know, but when the banquet started, and that idiot Zhan Yunjian was talking about Lin Ming, he was also sighing about how great Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun were. Hehe, I wanted to smile at that time, but I pressed it down and didn't mention Senior-apprentice Brother Lei. Otherwise if Zhan Yunjian knew that Senior-apprentice Brother Lei was even fiercer than Mu Qianyu and Mu

Bingyun at their age, I wonder what kind of funny expression he would have!”

“How hilarious that that cocky braggart Zhan Yunjian thought he had a good understanding of our Thundercrest Sect’s talents. This time his jaw will definitely drop!” As Zhou Xiaoling spoke, she had an extremely smug expression on her face, her small face flushed as if that great honor was also her own. She stopped eating her spirit fruit, instead vacantly gazing out with a longing expression, “I really want to see Senior-apprentice Brother Lei go out onstage and defeat everyone. That Mu Dingshan, Mu Xiaoqing, and especially that damned loser Lin Ming! I hope that Lin Ming gets beaten up until he can’t walk anymore!”

As Zhou Xiaoling spoke, she became more and more animated as if she couldn’t stop spouting off. But as she spoke, Zhou Lie’s expression was becoming increasingly ugly. He had a very dark foreboding feeling in his heart, as if his doom was arriving. As he saw Zhou Xiaoling’s expression flush red with joy and excitement, that scary premonition was finally fulfilled. He used a true essence sound transmission and sharply asked, “Xiaoling, don’t tell me you like that boy!”

Xiaoling suddenly froze, then immediately blushed. She was just like a small kitten whose tail was stepped on. “Big Brother, stop making stuff up!”

Zhou Lie’s heart shook, this was bad! If his little sister liked that boy, then this would be an absolute tragedy! Even if there wasn’t a problem with Lei Mubai’s status, Zhou Lie knew that this pale and sinister-seeming fellow would never take his sister seriously. At

most, she would be some playtoy. But now, he knew that Zhou Xiaoling would never listen to anything he said. Not only that, but the key was that all he had were baseless assumptions, and not even a shred of evidence to back up his suspicions.

‘This fellow!!!!!!!’

.....

As half an hour passed, many of the people at the banquets had already left to rest, go to the restroom, chat, laugh, or have small competitions with each other. The entire mountain was bustling with activity.

Lei Mubai sat at the banquet table the entire time, slowly drinking.

“Mu Yuhuang noticed me.” Lei Mubai suddenly said using a true essence sound transmission.

Lei Jingtian’s eyes were still closed in meditation, as calm as before, “Mu Yuhuang is already at the late Revolve Core realm. Even if you try to conceal your energy, you cannot escape her sense, nor can you hide the thick true essence of your body.”

Lei Mubai sneered, “At most she only sees that my cultivation is deep, but she won’t be able to see through the ancient Devil Arts that I cultivate. I joined the Thundercrest Sect three years ago when I was 14, and have already been there for a long time. I’ve

also practiced the core cultivation methods of the Thundercrest Sect. Truly, I'm not different to a real disciple. When she discovers that I am a Saint rank talent of the Thundercrest Sect, at most she'll be suspicious, but she won't be able to find any fault with me."

The pale youth was very confident in himself. He practiced a cultivation method that his Master Ancestor had found 300 years ago within a scroll inside some ancient ruins of the South Sea. Even if Mu Yuhuang was a Peerless Emperor, she wouldn't be able to see through his status using this point.

Once that ancient Devil Art was mentioned, Lei Jingtian suddenly moved. He opened his eyes, his voice low, "Your master will not go back on his words, right?"

The pale youth slyly smiled, "Of course not. This war between the South Sea Demon Region and Phoenix Island will be a perpetual war that draws in the entire South Horizon Region; it's not something that will be settled in just a year or two. When the time comes, we will also be relying on the Thundercrest Sect Sovereign's help, so how could my master go back on his promise? Since Master has promised to bestow a scroll of the first layer of the ancient Devil Art to the Thundercrest Sect Sovereign, it will be delivered to your hands a month from now."

Lei Jingtian humphed and icily said, "You better not be playing any tricks. Otherwise, I'll have you regret your words!"

"Haha, of course! Otherwise, if you galvanize the alliance between the Five Element Region and Divine Phoenix Island, my

South Sea Demon Region would find this war increasingly difficult. Of course, since you have now ruined the alliance between Divine Phoenix Island and the Five Element Region, that is truly an act worthy of praise. I shall truthfully report this to my master so that Sovereign shall gain merits.”

“Then I’ll have to trouble the Saint Son. As long as this old man’s conditions are met then everything will be fine.”

“Rest assured, my South Sea Demon Region is only interested in cooperation with the Five Element Region and isn’t interested in conflict. The Five Element Region is several millions of miles away from the South Horizon Region. Even if my South Sea Demon Region becomes a Holy Land in the future, we won’t threaten the Five Element Region.”

Lei Jingtian showed no expression. Although this South Sea Demon Region’s Saint Son was like a cold and calculating serpent, his words about this matter still sounded truthful. Throughout the ages, he hadn’t heard of a Holy Land crossing two domains to conquer others. Initially, even Silent Demon Emperor City didn’t cause waves within the South Horizon Region.

Lei Jingtian closed his eyes and slowly said, “Once the South Sea Demon Region conquers Divine Phoenix Island, will they be able to become a Holy Land?”

“It will probably be much more difficult. In order to become a Holy Land, we will most likely need to swallow the Dire Space Sect and Supreme Mystery Temple.” Lei Mubai said, shaking his head. A normal fifth-grade sect was a far, far distance from becoming a

Holy Land. They would probably need hundreds or even a thousand more years of accumulated power.

“In order to become a Holy Land, plundering more resources is useless. What is most important is developing a Peerless Emperor. I believe that Your Highness the Saint Son will have a promising chance of achieving this!” Lei Jingtian said as he looked at Lei Mubai, a rare compliment coming from him.

“Haha!” Lei Mubai smiled. Even though he knew he was only flattering him, it still caused his mood to become much better. “In the past, I might not have been so confident. But now I have the ancient Devil Tome in my hands, and with my seventh-grade thunder origin energy fusion compatibility, I truly have a chance of succeeding! However, I will also need a great destiny to fall upon me!”

Something like destiny was truly an elusive and enigmatic idea. Within the 100,000,000 miles of the Sky Spill Continent, there were trillions of people. Within so many people, there were also countless geniuses. However, those who were able to claim the title of Peerless Emperor were extremely rare. Besides the old monsters that hid in their own areas and sought a breakthrough, those that were truly known to the world were no more than 10 individuals.

Even these ten individuals were secretive in their movements and locations. Perhaps there were some that had already ascended to higher realms.

This near-zero chance had caused many geniuses to sigh in utter disappointment. Even if they were Saint rank talents, they would

most likely stop in the late Revolving Core realm, or even the extreme Revolving Core realm.

Those geniuses that wished to become a Peerless Emperor had to experience a massive lucky opportunity, or even many of them. This was the so-called ‘destiny’ that one needed. In a sense, that Lei Mubai could be born into a fifth-grade sect, be accepted as a disciple of the sect master, and even later cultivate the ancient Devil Tome, could also be considered a kind of destiny.

Every Peerless Emperor would accumulate a vast destiny upon their bodies. As youths, they would be geniuses that encountered major fortuitous events, endless lucky chances, and their strength would leap past all others’. They would shake the world, showing disdain for all other heroes!

When these Peerless Emperors were young, they might meet many formidable opponents. For instance, those peers that were known as invincible powerhouses. Within their domain, they would be called the top junior of their sect. However, when such a person fell under their boot, defeated by another that was at their cultivation – or even someone that had jumped realms in order to defeat them – then that victory would gradually seep into their bones, becoming a faith that implanted itself into their heart, becoming a part of their strength and talent!

Against any odds, they would be unafraid!

This faith, in addition to the destiny that gathered to them, would be enough for a genius to soar into the heavens.

To break into the Revolving Core realm before 30, to reach extreme Revolving Core before 50, and to become a Peerless Emperor before 100 years of age!

However, once one passed this age, it would become too difficult to progress in their cultivation again.

For instance, someone like Mu Yuhuang. That old bag Mu Yuhuang would only be able to increase her own cultivation by a small realm even if she used 100 years of time. To her, this was already a great fortune.

For instance, someone like Lei Jingtian. He had already been stuck at the middle Revolving Core realm for a full 150 years, crazily trying to overcome the mire he was in. Otherwise, how would he have come up with such a dire plan to cooperate with the South Sea Demon Region? This was all so that he could cultivate the ancient Devil Tome.

Lei Jingtian suddenly remembered something. He calmly said, "That boy called Lin Ming might become your opponent in the future. I never imagined that Divine Phoenix Island would actually produce such a good weapon. Aren't you afraid that he'll steal your position? How do you plan on dealing with him?"

"Haha, I'll think about this issue once Divine Phoenix Island is destroyed." Lei Mubai lightly said. In normal circumstances, when two top sects declared war on each other, they would first destroy the core of their enemy's strength. These would be the Xiantian

and Revolving Core powerhouses. As for the disciples of these sects, they wouldn't be deliberately aimed at.

A war between large sects would last at most one or two years. No matter how talented one was, it was impossible for a junior to become a Revolving Core master in that time. Thus, they would have no influence on the war.

On the contrary, after the war ended, the disciples of the sect that was destroyed would be under the threat of death. Under this pressure, there were many people that would be willing to betray their sect and join the victor. They would be willing to have a restricting seal placed on them and be used.

This was what a demonic sect would usually do after a war. Because they too would suffer a massive loss of monsters, they would require additional manpower to rebuild their sect.

Lei Mubai glanced at Lin Ming, derision thick in his voice as he said, "Once Divine Phoenix Island is destroyed, if he knows what's good for them, he'll be a good little boy and let my South Sea Demon Region place a restriction seal on him. Otherwise, I'll suck out his blood essence and use it to cultivate my martial arts, and I'll use his corpse as a zombie protector for myself. That should be making the best use of him."

As Lei Mubai spoke, the long and thick incense on the stage began to slowly burn to its end...

Chapter 378 – Purple Air Dawns from the East, A Pair Of Dragons Will Struggle

The Divine Phoenix Island and Five Element Region disciples had already returned before the two hour break had ended, anxiously waiting to see the unparalleled clash that would follow.

Within the memories of these disciples, this would be the highest level duel that had occurred between the Five Element Region and Divine Phoenix Island since they could remember. This was a rare event that wouldn't even happen once in a decade; naturally, no one wanted to miss it.

“Haha, it's about to start, I can't wait!”

“Lin Ming, Senior-apprentice Brother Dingshan, Senior-apprentice Sister Xiaoqing – the ultimate trifecta! Can the Five Element Region manage to stop them?”

“I'm most looking forward to seeing Senior-apprentice Brother Lin Ming fight. In order to allow Senior-apprentice Brother Lin Ming to recover his top condition, he should be the last one up. I wonder how many chief disciples Lin Ming will manage to overcome.”

The Divine Phoenix Island disciples were excitedly discussing. They had a great deal of confidence in Lin Ming. Lin Ming had used just his spear to evenly match with Xiao Chi; he absolutely had the strength to fight with a chief disciple.

Therefore, these minor Divine Phoenix Island disciples had taken Lin Ming as their idol, and instead of saying that Lin Ming couldn't win, said that he could in fact defeat several chief disciples.

Of course, the disciples of the Five Element Region would never admit this. They still believed that Lin Ming would suffer a disastrous defeat in his last battle.

The six great chief disciples were the most outstanding disciples of their sect that had passed through multiple selection processes. But in terms of these Five Element Region disciples' mental states and morale, if the most powerful junior of their sect was defeated by someone who was even younger than them, this would be a serious blow to their self-esteem.

The incense finally burnt out. As Mu Yuhuang was about to stand up to speak, she actually gasped in surprise. She turned her head towards the banquet square's entrance, as if she couldn't believe her own eyes. A moment later, she quickly rose up to meet the new arrival.

The audience didn't know what was happening. Then, they saw an old woman with shining silver hair walking into the square, leaning on a walking stick with a smile on her face. She wore a long shawl embroidered with a hundred birds and phoenixes, and a crimson phoenix coronet was placed upon her head. She was very old, looking no different than a mortal woman who was around 70 or 80.

Everyone was petrified. The Divine Phoenix Island disciples were stunned speechless.

“Is... is that... is that the High Ancestor?”

“The High Ancestor has actually come!”

“I’ve been in the sect for dozens of years, yet this is the first time that I’ve seen the High Ancestor!”

Divine Phoenix Island’s High Ancestor was a woman named Mu Fengxian. Her cultivation was at the extreme Revolving Core realm, and in the past she was the Saintess of Divine Phoenix Island. In her youth, she was also a Saint rank talent.

Of those present, besides a few Revolving Core masters, the rest of them had only seen Mu Fengxian’s appearance in portraits.

Over 200 years ago, Mu Fengxian had gone into seclusion within the back mountains of Divine Phoenix Island, no longer caring about human affairs. No one thought that during this banquet competition, Mu Fengxian would actually appear!

It had to be known that Mu Fengxian had seen this rare high level competition scene many times. When she was young, she had also participated in many of these events, and had even been a champion, conquering all the heroic elites, her name shaking the land.

It could be said that these sorts of events were trivial matters to her. She simply didn't need to bother with attending.

Thus when Mu Fengxian had arrived, everyone was incomparably surprised.

“Elder Master, how come you personally came?” Mu Yuhuang asked, puzzled.

“Haha, within the back mountains, I saw purple air rise from the east, a pair of dragons will struggle. Today, a grand event will occur – a True Dragon will be born. Though, I do not know who will win. This old body wants to come out and take a look.”

“A True Dragon will be born? A pair of dragons will struggle?” Mu Yuhuang was startled, Mu Fengxian was without a doubt referring to Lin Ming. But, was the other dragon... that strange youth from the Thundercrest Sect?

Mu Yuhuang noticed that Mu Fengxian was really scrutinizing Lei Mubai, and her willowy eyebrows pressed together. The Thundercrest Sect really had a Saint rank talent! No wonder Lei Jingtian was so emboldened earlier. Even in the face of Lin Ming's stunning performance, he maintained the sense that he was in control of all events.

After Mu Fengxian glanced at Lei Mubai, she only smiled as she looked at Lin Ming. After several breaths of time, she then nodded with a satisfied expression. As Mu Yuhuang held her hand, she walked over to the seat of honor and quietly sat down.

Lin Ming gazed at this old woman. Extreme Revolving Core! That was only a step away from becoming a Peerless Emperor. Of course, this single step was no different than a moat; to cross it was beyond difficult.

Within the Thundercrest Sect banquet area, Lei Jingtian saw Mu Fengxian appear and lost a bit of his calm. “This old bag, why would she come out? She shouldn’t have seen any flaws.”

Lei Mubai frowned. “She shouldn’t have. Even though Mu Fengxian is like some old ghost, it should still be impossible for her to recognize my cultivation method. Not only that, but I also cultivate the Thundercrest Sect’s ‘Nine Heavens Profound Thunder Law’ and I control a Thunder Soul. Saying that I am a true Thundercrest Sect disciple is no exaggeration!”

“I hope so.” After thinking about it some more, Lei Jingtian also thought there wouldn’t be anything amiss. Not even the Thundercrest Sect Vice Sovereigns knew of Lei Mubai’s status.

Lei Mubai’s expression was cloudy as he said, “This old bag Mu Fengxian, I wonder how many dozens of years of life she has left. Looking at how old she is, she’s probably no less than 700!”

After a martial artist reached the Revolving Core realm, depending on their state, they could reach 500 years of life to 800 years of life.

A martial artist also aged very slowly. For instance, although Mu

Yuhuang was already 400-500 years old, she still had the appearance of a very beautiful middle-aged woman. But, when her life was about to reach its end, she would rapidly age until she became like Mu Fengxian with just several dozen years of life left.

Originally, the South Sea Demon Region was planning on waiting until Mu Fengxian died before they attacked Divine Phoenix Island. But, Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun were growing too quickly. If Mu Fengxian didn't die and these two sisters still broke through to the Revolving Core realm, they would have wasted all their time. The gains simply didn't balance out the losses.

So they had no choice but to take action first, taking advantage of the fact that the two sisters hadn't grown yet.

Mu Fengxian put away her walking stick and said, "This old woman just wants to have a look at the fun. You do not need to be so formal, go about as usual."

Although Mu Fengxian had said this, in her presence, the Divine Phoenix Island disciples were extremely careful and respectful. To them, Mu Fengxian was an existence that only existed in ancient texts. Within many of the ancient texts of Divine Phoenix Island, Mu Fengxian's portrait was recorded. But as for Mu Fengxian herself, younger disciples never saw her. Mu Fengxian was just a character of legends, no one dared to be rash in front of her.

However, even though they were careful, with Mu Fengxian's arrival, the grand spectacle of this competition had reached the ultimate height, causing the disciples to shiver with excitement.

With Mu Yuhuang's announcement, the competition could finally begin!

A blue-robe girl moved, appearing like a burst of smoke on the stage. This girl was Mu Xiaoqing.

Although Mu Xiaoqing looked comparatively ordinary, she had a very majestic and elegant temperament that gave off a fresh feeling. "Divine Phoenix Island Blue Luan Faction Chief Disciple Mu Xiaoqing, 19 years old. I challenge all heroic elites of the Five Element Region's six sects. Please advise!"

"It seems Mu Xiaoqing is going onstage first."

Within the Thundercrest Sect banquet area, Lei Mubai faintly smiled. Mu Xiaoqing was weaker than Mu Dingshan, thus the reason that she was sent out first. Without waiting for the other chief disciples to respond, Lei Mubai entered the stage.

As Lei Mubai walked onstage, he aroused the attention of everyone immediately. Even the Sunfire Princess Huo Ruyan who was readying herself to step up was shocked.

"Who is this fellow? Did he just come out of nowhere?"

"Thundercrest Sect? It isn't the Thunderclap Zhou Lie entering the stage?"

“A new person? I don’t remember seeing such a character within the Thundercrest Sect.”

The Five Element Region disciples began talking amongst themselves. In this level of fight, only a chief disciple should have the qualifications to participate. For someone else to go onstage, that was truly disgraceful.

There were even many Thundercrest disciples that didn’t know who this Lei Mubai was. They only saw this pale fellow walking with the Thunder Sovereign. They believed he was a new disciple and didn’t pay much attention to him, but it seemed that the fellow had the gall to openly step onto the stage.

What was going on?

Mu Xiaoqing frowned, not speaking. No matter who it was, since they came onstage, she would treat them equally and impartially. She took a blue sword in her hand and coldly said, “Make your move!”

“Haha, Senior-apprentice Sister Mu, there’s no need to be so hasty. There are still several words I wish to say.” Lei Mubai smiled. However, as this smile crossed his face that looked like it had never seen the sun, this smile instead gave off a very spooky and disturbing feeling. Lei Mubai cupped his hands across his chest, saying, “Thundercrest Sect’s Lei Mubai, 17 years old.”

With these words, the audience was startled. 17 years old?

Lei Mubai was very tall, and it was difficult to see how old he was. But, he was actually 17 years old and his cultivation was already at the early Houtian realm. This result was on par with Mu Qianyu!

However, a 17 year old genius that was able to reach the Houtian realm wasn't necessarily a Saint rank talent. Although there were those whose martial cultivation talent defied the heavens, they could still be weak in terms of their true combat strength. Thus, these individuals could not be considered as Saint rank talents.

Mu Qianyu had a seventh-grade fire origin energy fusion compatibility and also had a very pure and rich Vermillion Bird bloodline. In combination with her outstanding cultivation method, she was able to qualify as a Saint rank talent. As for Lei Mubai, it was impossible to determine whether he was strong or weak.

Zhan Yunjian narrowed his eyes as he looked at Lei Mubai. He remembered that as the banquet started, Zhou Xiaoling had been mischievously smiling about something, like there was some wicked secret she was holding in. Now, Zhan Yunjian finally realized what that was all about. 'So that's how it is. What Zhou Xiaoling was thinking about was this man. A Saint rank talent? The Thundercrest Sect actually managed to raise a Saint rank talent?'

Zhan Yunjian's complexion sank. The Thundercrest Sect already had two masters in Zhou Xiaoling and Zhou Lie. If they also had a Saint rank talent...

Lin Ming sat below the stage, deeply gazing at Lei Mubai. From this man's body, he was able to sense thick true essence and a savage aura hidden within. It was as if this person was a monstrous beast that came from the abyss.

‘This fellow is not simple at all.’

Lin Ming gave a judgement in his heart. This Lei Mubai gave him an unfathomable feeling.

Onstage, Lei Mubai crossed his hands across his back, no intention of moving from his pose. He waited for the buzz to calm down and then slowly said, “To all the seniors of Divine Phoenix Island, I have two small propositions to make. I wonder if we can discuss it here.”

“What propositions?” The one to speak was Mu Yuhuang.

Lei Mubai slightly bowed to Mu Yuhuang, and smiled as he said, “The first proposition I want to make is that I would like to challenge all of the young heroic elites of Divine Phoenix Island!”

With this sentence, all of the Divine Phoenix Island disciples were at first stunned. Then, together, they all exploded into rage.

Chapter 379 – Spit In Your Face

Challenge all the heroic elites of Divine Phoenix Island?

Although Lin Ming had done so a moment ago, he had been compelled to do so by the Deep Earth Sect Elder. The Deep Earth Sect's Shi Zhongkun had verbally mocked him, this Lin Ming had to do so, or it would have only weakened his momentum.

However, no one had forced Lei Mubai. Not only that, but Lei Mubai had no reputation, there was simply no one who had an idea of who he was. For a 17 year old to reach the Houtian realm was a very amazing event, but one's cultivation speed didn't necessarily correlate to an equally good combat strength.

To so openly shout a challenge at all of the Divine Phoenix Island disciples was not different than kicking them in the foot; how could these Divine Phoenix Island disciples possibly tolerate this.

“This boy wants to die!”

“Who the hell does he think he is!?”

“He wants to challenge all the heroic elites of my Divine Phoenix Island? F*ck, who does he think he is, does he think he's Junior-apprentice Brother Lin? Even Junior-apprentice Brother Lin challenged the direct disciples and hadn't fought the chief disciples. This fellow is too arrogant! Junior-brother Apprentice Lin should just come up and finish him in a flash!”

The Divine Phoenix Island disciples were scolding this Lei Mubai while they cussed. Even the Five Element Region disciples didn't believe that Lei Mubai would be able to do so. Even if his cultivation was high, that didn't mean he would have a combat strength that defied the heavens. Even if his strength reached that of a Saint rank talent, he wouldn't necessarily win. Divine Phoenix Island had more than 10 Houtian juniors. Not to mention anyone else, but just Mu Dingshan, Mu Xiaoqing, and Lin Ming, these three people were able to have Lei Mubai eat dirt.

“Seniors, please be patient, I haven't finished speaking yet.” As Lei Mubai stood onstage, he smiled with complete confidence. There was a calming true essence fluctuation that was hidden between his words. In a flash, all of the disciples that were lower than the Houtian realm were affected, and the commotion began to die down.

Lin Ming was a bit stunned “Directly impacting soul force?”

Although these disciples that were affected were the lower grade disciples, the effect was over an extremely wide range. To be able to affect so many disciples at the same time was a truly remarkable feat.

It's just... this sort of soul force fluctuation gave Lin Ming a sense of déjà vu, as if he had sensed it before. But as he thought about it, he couldn't remember just where he had felt it.

Did he sense incorrectly?

Lin Ming carefully thought for a moment, but ultimately wasn't able to come up with anything. He could only attribute this to being a coincidence or an error of his own. After all, sometimes there would be similar soul force fluctuations between two people that had no relation. It was just like two strangers that had similar looks.

Onstage, Lei Mubai continued to say, "I did such, not because I have any evil intentions, but only for one thing, and that is to prove my strength and talent. With this, I would like to propose a marriage to Divine Phoenix Island!"

Propose marriage?

After Lei Mubai spoke, everyone present was frozen.

Lin Ming was also shocked speechless, what was this fellow trying to accomplish?

"Yes, this is my second proposition. My Thundercrest Sect would like to propose marriage to Divine Phoenix Island, and hope that we can forge an alliance to jointly resist the demonic sect together."

Propose marriage to Divine Phoenix Island, forge an alliance, and resist the demonic sect together!

Such important words could only be spoken by the top figures of

the Thundercrest Sect – no one else had the qualifications to do so. Mu Yuhuang frowned, turning to look at Lei Jingtian.

Lei Jingtian laughed and then stood up. He said, “High Master Yuhuang, Mubai is the Limitless Envoy of my Thundercrest Sect and carries the Purple Thunder Command. The words that he says can also represent my Thundercrest Sect.”

“Limitless Envoy?” Mu Yuhuang’s eyebrows arched up. Within the Thundercrest Sect, the one that held the title of ‘Limitless’ was one that was a Saint rank talent. The Limitless Envoy was also equal to the Divine Phoenix Island’s Saintess, and would be able to inherit the position of Sovereign. As for the Purple Thunder Command, that was a symbol of great authority. With it, one could appoint or dismiss outer court Elders, or command inner court Elders. If Lei Jingtian’s words were true, then Lei Mubai was already a top power figure within the Thundercrest Sect.

If such a powerful figure wanted to propose marriage, and also wanted to prove their strength and talent through battle, the object of this marriage was obvious.

“Who do you want to marry?” Mu Yuhuang asked, straight to the point. Her two eyes flashed with an icy coldness, aggressively staring at Lei Mubai. If someone with a weak will met these eyes, they would feel weak at heart and wouldn’t dare to look back.

However, Lei Mubai seemed extremely confident. “I hope that High Master Yuhuang can marry Her Highness Qianyu to me. If so, the Thundercrest Sect is willing to assist Divine Phoenix Island in any way to resist the South Sea Demon Region.

As Lei Mubai spoke, Mu Qianyu was petrified; he actually wanted to marry her?

But as for the Divine Phoenix Island disciples, they were like a pot of sizzling oil that was poured into a vat of cold water; they instantly exploded into an apoplectic rage.

Especially the male disciples, their hearts erupted with rage. Mu Qianyu was the Saintess of Divine Phoenix Island. In the minds of these disciples, she was no different than a goddess. Wanting to marry Mu Qianyu as a wife? This was an unthinkable act. Because in the eyes of these male disciples, Mu Qianyu was a sacred and inviolable existence.

Now some fellow had actually come from the Thundercrest Sect, and dared to blatantly profane the goddess of their hearts?

This was beyond tolerable. If this wasn't in public, all of these righteously indignant male disciples would have already all rushed towards this Lei Mubai and torn him limb from limb.

“You’re just a toad that wants to eat swan meat! Marry Her Highness the Saintess? Why don’t you take a good look at yourself first!? What qualifications do you have?!”

“He’s just a stupid idiot. He must have gone crazy when he cultivated his thunder skills and fried his brain, turning into a retard!”

“Stupid child, you haven’t even grown all your hair. Stop talking like this is a dream. Get out of my sight and f*ck off home!”

Compared to the stormy furor of these Divine Phoenix Island disciples, Lin Ming’s response was much more calm.

Marry Mu Qianyu? This sort of marriage proposition had to have some sort of nefarious scheme behind it. Either it was a combination of interests or other reasons. In short, it was impossible that Lei Mubai wished to marry because of love or desire for beauty, and then decided to take Mu Qianyu’s marriage as the price for cooperation between the Thundercrest Sect and Divine Phoenix Island.

Lin Ming subconsciously clenched his fists, his knuckles cracking. Although he didn’t know the exact reason why Lei Mubai proposed this, all he knew was that he wanted to go onstage and flatten that smile on Lei Mubai’s stupid face.

Against the verbal abuse of the Divine Phoenix Island disciples that was like a rolling tide, Lei Mubai still smiled all the same. In truth, what he wanted the most was to take both Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun into his harem. Not to mention, how great would the feeling be to be able to enjoy twin sisters as his wives? That was simply utter bliss. And, what was most important was that Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun both had the bloodline of a Saint Beast. Whether it was the Vermillion Bird bloodline or the Blue Luan bloodline, both would be a great benefit to his cultivation. Not only that, but he could also study the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ and the ‘Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code’.

That would be a great cause for rejoicing.

If he could obtain everything, then that would not just be a lucky chance, but simply a massive destiny that fell into his hands!

As for the Thundercrest Sect assisting Divine Phoenix Island, he would definitely be able to circumvent that.

First, he would begin a bumbling attack against the South Sea Demon Region and kill a few people to assuage Divine Phoenix Island. Then, once he managed to obtain Mu Qianyu's virginity, he would have the Thundercrest Sect make a sudden betrayal. When that time came, perhaps Divine Phoenix Island's war with the South Sea Demon Region would be finished much earlier than expected.

The only regretful matter would be that he wouldn't be able to obtain Mu Bingyun. When Divine Phoenix Island broke under his hands, Mu Bingyun would probably prefer death. What a pity that her bloodline would perish along with her pretty body...

As Lei Mubai thought of this regretful future, he smiled and glanced at Mu Bingyun, covering up the greedy desires that sprung up within his heart.

"You want to marry Qianyu?" Mu Yuhuang smiled as she looked at Lei Mubai.

"Yes, I ask High Master for help..."

“Dream on!!!” Lei Mubai hadn’t yet finished, when he was violently interrupted by a thunderous roar from Mu Yuhuang.

Lei Mubai’s smile stiffened. In his opinion, the conditions he had placed out were already very good. Divine Phoenix Island was current in a very precarious position – one could even say that they were facing the threat of extinction. To take the marriage of a Saintess in exchange for the support of a fourth-grade sect seemed like a completely reasonable matter.

Moreover, it was marriage, and not like she was selling her body. With his status, looks, and strength, he was completely worthy of Mu Qianyu. Marrying her wouldn’t be dishonoring her in any way.

“Why does Master Ancestor Yuhuang say this?”

Mu Yuhuang sneered, her expression vicious as she said, “This old woman is disinclined to argue with such a disgusting lecherous womanizer like yourself. If you want to challenge all the juniors of my Divine Phoenix Island, then you may. But if you wish to marry Qianyu, then dream on!”

Lei Mubai’s pale complexion was very ugly. In this situation, he was actually berated as a ‘disgusting lecherous womanizer’, this was truly embarrassing. He only reluctantly managed to keep the smile on his face, suppressing the simmering anger in his heart. He turned to glance at Mu Fengxian. After all, this old bag was still the supreme authority of Divine Phoenix Island.

But as he glanced at her, he saw that Mu Fengxian's eyes were half closed, a smile playing across her lips like she was dreamily asleep.

Lei Mubai's pale face completely sunk, "High Master Yuhuang, please be careful of the manner in which you speak. If you do not wish to offend others, you shouldn't make such indiscreet and irresponsible remarks in public. Otherwise, you might regret it if you affect the alliance between the Five Element Region and Divine Phoenix Island."

"...You might regret it if you affect the alliance between the Five Element Region and Divine Phoenix Island? Are you threatening this old woman? Hehehe! Hahaha!" Mu Yuhuang suddenly pounded the table with her fist. With a crumbling sound, the banquet table that she slapped completely turned into powder! Even the jade bowls and dishes shattered into tiny pieces!

"Little ignorant boy, do you believe that this old woman won't slap you to death with a single hand? You think that the alliance between the Five Element Region and my Divine Phoenix Island can really be so easily promised by a junior like yourself? What a joke! If Lei Jingtian really had this intention, he wouldn't have created so many stupid obstacles in my way, trying to block me at every turn! Do you think that this old woman is gullible like a snotty three year old child? You had no intention of forming this alliance to begin with, so this old woman has no interest in asking you for anything. You really think that my Divine Phoenix island is destined to perish just because I won't have help from your sect!?!?"

“If you wish to challenge the heroic elites of my Divine Phoenix Island, then go ahead and fight as much as you want, but don’t blather so much foolish nonsense in front of me! Xiaoqing, make your move!”

Mu Yuhuang’s rapid series of retorts that barraged Lei Mubai caused his face to turn ashen. Even Lei Jingtian was shocked, He hadn’t though Mu Yuhuang would have such a staunch and violent reaction.

Lei Jingtian coldly snorted and said, “Mu Yuhuang, I gave you three points of respect and yet you ignore all decorum and bully the weak!”

Mu Yuhuang sneered. “So what? I will bully you and what can you do about it!? For several days you’ve blustered with your stupid swagger in front of this old woman, repeatedly ridiculing in your snide tone and even destroying the alliance that this old woman proposed. To friends and guests, this old woman is polite, but to such a cheap little b*tch like you, this old woman only wants to spit in your face!!!”

After Mu Yuhuang spoke, there was complete silence, even the drop of a pin could be heard throughout the entire banquet square. Every Divine Phoenix Island disciple had been stunned silly. This was Lei Jingtian, the Sovereign of the Thundercrest Sect! With just a stamp of his feet, he could cause waves to rise within the Five Element Region. Yet during such a formal event, Mu Yuhuang had derided him and called him a cheap little b*tch!

“You... you.....!” Lei Jingtian trembled with rage. “Well said, Mu

Yuhuang! This old man...” Lei Jingtian had also wanted to spit out several ruthless words. But, after he noticed Mu Fengxian who was sitting near Mu Yuhuang, he stopped himself, the words dying in his throat, swallowing his saliva and panting like he was short of breath.

Lei Mubai’s face had fallen to the point that it was almost dripping water. “Since High Master Yuhuang has spoken, let it be so. Then, I still ask for advice from all the young heroic elites of Divine Phoenix Island. Since High Master seems so self-assured, I would like to ask: if I can defeat all of Divine Phoenix Island’s disciples by myself, what then?”

Chapter 380 – Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder

Lei Mubai's face had fallen to the point that it was almost dripping water. "Since High Master Yuhuang has spoken, let it be so. Then, I still ask for advice from all the young heroic elites of Divine Phoenix Island. Since High Master seems so self-assured, I would like to ask: if I can defeat all of Divine Phoenix Island's disciples by myself, what then?"

Lei Mubai's words were obviously daring her to act. He calculated that Mu Yuhuang had a very tough and unbending personality that wouldn't accept defeat, so he could only provoke her like this.

"You want to incite me so that I'll somehow take the matter of Qianyu's wedding as a gambling stake with you?"

Lei Mubai calmly stared at Mu Yuhuang, this idea clearly in his heart.

Mu Yuhuang bleakly laughed twice. Suddenly, her willowy eyebrows shot up, and the aura of her entire body erupted forth. In the blink of an eye, a visible crimson ring of fire burst forth from around her; this was the terrifying power of fire condensed from fire origin energy.

Huu!

That ring of fire instantly spread throughout the entire banquet audience. It caused no damage, and not even a single dish was broken in half, but everyone present felt a terrifying pressure like a mountain top was crushing down on them. Especially Lei Mubai, who bore the brunt of this ferocious aura; he felt like his organs had been struck by a sledgehammer and was forced several steps back, his feet hitting the floor with a ‘deng deng deng’ sound.

Mu Yuhuang’s voice was chilling, “Give up on this idea in your heart. This old woman has never feared anyone in making a gambling bet. But this old woman will also not take Qianyu’s marriage as a gambling stake. If you wish to bet on anything else, this old woman will accompany you!”

As Mu Yuhuang spoke, Mu Qianyu had slowly moved behind her, looking at Mu Yuhuang’s hair that had long turned silver, and pursed her lips. Mu Qianyu didn’t say anything. She was aware that Mu Yuhuang had never married in her entire life, and also never had children before. She knew that Mu Yuhuang had viewed her as her own flesh and blood daughter.

The scene was tense, as if it could blow up at any moment.

Lei Mubai took deep breaths, slowly suppressing the roiling true essence within his body that was aggravated by Mu Yuhuang’s terrifying aura. “I’m not interested in betting anything else. Since High Mastert is not interested, then that too is fine. With my status as the Thundercrest Sect’s Limitless Envoy, I challenge all the heroic elites of Divine Phoenix Island!”

Lei Mubai’s words were filled with arrogance and contempt. As

the Saint Son of the South Sea Demon Region, and also the top talent of a fifth-grade sect, he naturally looked down on the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island.

‘I had wanted to use this method of marriage to take Mu Qianyu’s virginity and then use this chance to have the Thundercrest Sect betray Divine Phoenix Island. But I have no idea what sort of drugs this old bag Mu Yuhuang took that she immediately labeled me as a lecherous womanizer, and didn’t even consider the matter before rejecting me. Does she want Mu Qianyu to end up like her and never marry in her lifetime?’

‘Could this old woman have found something wrong with my body?’ Lei Mubai thought of this and his heart tightened on the spot. However, he immediately shook his head. ‘No, that’s impossible. With her personality, if she really did recognize me, then she would probably capture me right here. Not just that, but there is no flaw with my body. Could it have just been her intuition that told her I had another scheme in mind and thus flatly refused me?’

Lei Mubai grit his teeth, wishing in his heart that he could tear Mu Yuhuang to pieces. ‘Since I can’t take Mu Qianyu’s virginity, I’ll ruin all the chief disciples of Divine Phoenix Island. Since I have determined to become a Peerless Emperor, I must step over the corpses of a massive number of geniuses to arrive at that peak. I will shatter their confidence and engrave this experience in my heart! Mu Yuhuang, since you dare to act like this to me, I will break the spirit of your disciples so that they’ll find it difficult to ever step into the Revolving Core realm! This is the revenge that I will take for your insults against me today!’

Thinking this, Lei Mubai looked at Mu Xiaoqing, the corners of his mouth curving up in a nefarious grin. First, he would start with this girl! What a pity that the Blue Luan bloodline within her body was too thin, otherwise having a taste of her would be very delicious.

Mu Xiaoqing frowned. She felt that this Lei Mubai in front of her was no different than a cold and dangerous snake, his eyes filled with aggressiveness.

She flourished her longsword, coldly saying, “Take out your weapon!”

“Weapon?” Lei Mubai crossed his arms behind his back, speaking with utter disdain, “To deal with the likes of you, I don’t need my weapon. If you can last against five of my moves, I’ll consider this your win!”

“What!?”

Mu Xiaoqing’s slender eyebrows shot up, anger pulsing in her heart.

It wasn’t just Mu Xiaoqing, but all the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island were angry. This Lei Mubai was simply too arrogant! These words were all said to humiliate the other party! Normally when other martial artists fought, even if one knew their opponent was far inferior, they would still respect their opponent. But, these words were obviously all said to shame the other party and attack their confidence.

“You are too detestable!”

Mu Xiaoqing clenched her teeth, when had she ever been humiliated like this before?

Lin Ming shook his head. Since Lei Mubai had already spoken such words, this battle would continue, and not only that, but continue in the most violent and desperate manner possible. There was no point in trying to persuade Mu Xiaoqing otherwise. If she was humiliated by her opponent like this and chose to retreat, swallowing this fateful shame, the result would even be worse than suffering a crushing defeat.

“Xiaoqing, Lei Mubai is a Saint rank talent. If you do not have the ability to cope with him, admit defeat now.” Mu Yuhuang feared that Mu Xiaoqing would be provoked into doing something completely irrational, so she cautioned her with a true essence sound transmission.

“Saint rank talent?” Mu Xiaoqing gasped. The truth was that she had already expected this. If Lei Mubai had dared to speak ruthless words, how could he not be confident in his strength?

But deep down, she had an unyielding disposition that had no intention of conceding.

‘So what if you’re a Saint rank talent? Even if I’m weaker than you, I will still force you to use your weapon. At least, even if I lose, I won’t let you defeat me within five moves!’

Mu Xiaoqing stimulated the true essence in her body to the extreme, revolving the 'Blue Luan Abstract Phantom Code'. Although she was angry, she still maintained her calm reasoning, not losing her heart. If she violently attacked him, she would just be defeated faster.

“Hehe, you’re quite smart. But still useless.”

Lei Mubai gathered his hands together, and red arcs of lightning flashed in his hands like a beautiful living spirit. A faint crackling sound lingered in the air. These red arcs of lightning faintly exuded the aura of blood.

“Red lightning?”

This was the first time that Lin Ming had seen lightning of this color.

As the red light began to radiate more brightly, becoming increasingly dazzling, the thunder in Lei Mubai’s hands seemed to become a floating blob of blood.

“Thunder Soul! It’s actually an earth-step Thunder Soul!” A Thundercrest Sect disciple shouted out, stunned.

Even Zhou Lie was stunned. He had a Thunder Soul in his body, but that was a high-grade human-step Thunder Soul. Even so, his Thundercrest Sect had paid a great price in order to assist him in

completing its absorption.

Mu Qianyu let out a light breath; this was actually the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder. In the legends, it spoke of many ancient battlefields on which countless powerhouses fell from the sky, creating a dark and ominous land. These battlefields also happened to be places where there was intense thunder. After tens of thousands of years passed, a Thunder Soul would be born from absorbing the blood essence of the countless powerhouses, thus becoming this Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder!

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder could swallow an enemy's blood essence and use it for oneself. This was an extremely evil and diabolical kind of thunder.

Not only that, but it was a low-grade earth-step Thunder Soul. It was on par with Lin Ming's Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder!

Such a grade was not something that a non-middle Xiantian realm master would be able to absorb.

Even if a large sect used all sorts of supplementary materials and provided all sorts of facilities and assistance, paying a massive price, at most they would be able to assist an early Xiantian master in absorbing this!

But now, it was actually absorbed by this Lei Mubai. Of course, this didn't mean that Lei Mubai had strength equal to an early Xiantian master, but it meant that in the aspect of thunder talent, it was possible that he was a peerless monstrous genius!

Naturally, this was far worse than Lin Ming, who had absorbed the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder with a cultivation at the peak of Bone Forging; Lei Mubai had absorbed this Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder at the early Houtian realm. This fact was enough to cause the shock in Mu Qianyu's heart to subside some.

Mu Yuhuang's voice was heavy, "This Lei Mubai already has the talent to become a Peerless Emperor. As long as he can gather destiny around him, he will become a Peerless Emperor a hundred years from now!"

In order to become a Peerless Emperor, talent and destiny were indispensable. Mu Yuhuang had believed that Lin Ming had a great hope to become a Peerless Emperor, and that was because she saw a great destiny upon his body.

As for this Lei Mubai, he had a sufficient heaven-defying talent, all he lacked was a great enough destiny!

"Honorable Master, if that truly is the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder, then Xiaoqing will be in danger. If something goes wrong, there will be invisible injuries left within her, affecting her future cultivation.

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder could swallow a martial artist's blood essence. But once once lost blood essence, it was very difficult to recover from this loss. With just a bit gone, it would affect one's future achievements.

Mu Yuhuang's eyebrows twitched. Against the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder, it was naturally a dangerous situation. But if Mu Xiaoqing retreated without a fight, this would also create an evil spirit within Mu Xiaoqing's heart; it would be extremely difficult for her to ever overcome this hurdle. Not just that, but Lei Mubai was younger than Mu Xiaoqing, and his cultivation was only at the early Houtian realm, whereas Mu Xiaoqing was at the peak of the early Houtian realm.

Mu Xiaoqing surpassed him in age and cultivation. If she was humiliated and didn't fight back, this sort of disgrace would become a fatal blow to a martial artist's hearts of martial arts.

In the square, Lei Mubai's Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder had twined around his entire body. It was just like a venomous serpent that was wound around a man.

"Take my first move, Blood Thunder Claw!" Lei Mubai suddenly stepped forwards, the red light around his hand condensing into a giant claw!

The red light in his hands rushed out, expanding into a massive bloody claw that grasped at Mu Xiaoqing.

The bloody claw wasn't even close, but Mu Xiaoqing felt the blood essence within her body experience a traction force, causing turbulence within her true essence.

In this situation, Lei Mubai didn't dare to flagrantly swallow Mu

Xiaoqing's blood essence. With that old lady Yuhuang behind her shielding her, he had to let this go. Still, he could severely injure her.

The claw flew out, bringing the rolling sound of thunder with it. Mu Xiaoqing bit her lips, and a deep and vibrant blue light burst forth from the blue sword in her hands. The phantom of an ice lotus appeared behind Mu Xiaoqing, the ice lotus flower beginning to blossom.

“Blue Lotus Sword!”

The spinning blue lotus flower collided with Lei Mubai's crimson bloody claw, and a brilliant light flashed out, extremely gorgeous. Countless blue ice crystals were like flowers scattered in the air by celestial beauties all around, with red arcs of lightning savagely flying throughout.

True essence surged, blood vitality tumbled. A terrifying cold air flew out in all directions, and a layer of ice instantly covered the ground. However, these ice crystals were all coated with a strange blood red, as if they were exquisite red crystals.

In the moment that the true essence shockwave passed over Lin Ming, his heart shook.

‘Mm? It's this feeling again!’

Lin Ming felt a very familiar soul fluctuation within this true

essence shockwave. At the time when Lei Mubai went onstage, he also felt this once. He thought he had sensed wrongly, but now he had felt it once more.

What was causing this?

Lin Ming was anxious, his heart doubtful.

Chapter 381 – Netherworld Emperor's Descendant

In the brief time that Lin Ming was lost in thought, Mu Xiaoqing's ice lotus had already been crushed by Lei Mubai's blood claw!

After the blood claw tore apart the icy blue lotus, it continued on, striking at Mu Xiaoqing. Mu Xiaoqing flew backwards, her blue sword shining with a keen cold light as she thrust it out.

Ding ding ding!

There was the sound of metal colliding. Mu Xiaoqing let out countless sword lights that pierced the blood claw, sparking a cloud of bloody flog.

Bang!

The blood claw finally exploded, the blood mixing with the crimson lightning to splash onto Mu Xiaoqing. Mu Xiaoqing's clothes and body were completely stained red with blood.

Her face paled. She took several heavy steps backwards, each step creating a bloody footprint on the stage.

Lin Ming could clearly see that the truth was, this blood was generated from the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder's blood

essence that it had absorbed after it was stimulated with true essence. This was real blood!

This Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder truly seemed like an evil weapon.

Mu Xiaoqing looked at the bloodstains on the ground and then at Lei Mubai's grinning face. A sense of deep humiliation surged within her heart. She knew that she had already lost, Lei Mubai was simply playing with her. In that single strike from a moment ago, if Lei Mubai hadn't stood idly by afterwards, there was nothing she could have done to defend against it!

It wasn't just Mu Xiaoqing who realized this, many of the Five Element Region disciples also saw what was happening. Many of them begin to feel pity towards Mu Xiaoqing.

Anger, shame, and unwillingness swelled up within Mu Xiaoqing's heart. She knew that she was inferior to Lei Mubai, but in this situation, how could she possibly allow herself to admit defeat?

She clenched her teeth, sending a true essence sound transmission, "You and I have no past hatred or injustice against each other, so why are you demeaning me like this?"

"Haha, if you want to blame anyone then blame your master. She suppressed me, frustrating my spirit, so naturally I must retaliate against her. I don't have to the ability to directly oppose her, but within the rules of this banquet I can still ruin you. Having her feel

sick and nauseous also isn't a bad idea. Since this is all done within the proper rules, all she can do is swallow her insults. As for you, just consider it a stroke of bad luck!"

"So that's the reason." Mu Xiaoqing dismally smiled.

"Not just that. Since I've resolved myself to become a Peerless Emperor, in order to walk that road I must step over the corpses of a massive number of geniuses, and etch onto my bones the belief that I am at the apex of existence. As chief disciples of a top fourth-grade sect, you reluctantly qualify to be a body that paves the road for me. After I become a Peerless Emperor in the future, you can also consider this an honor."

These words caused Mu Xiaoqing to be thoroughly incensed. "Die!"

Mu Xiaoqing attacked, her figure rapidly rushing forwards. With every step she took, ice lotuses bloomed on the ground. She slashed out her sword, and a strong wind howled, carrying a terrifyingly freezing ice energy.

"Hey! Anything you do is useless!" Lei Mubai disdainfully smiled. His eyes filled with pity as he looked at Mu Xiaoqing. Then, he spread out his arms, and a deep crimson light erupted outwards. "Blood Prison!"

Hoo!

A massive amount of blood essence gushed out like a tide. All the space within dozens of feet around Lei Mubai seemed to thicken as if it were overflowing with sticky blood.

As Mu Xiaoqing rushed in, she felt as if there was a pressure bearing down on her chest. She found it difficult to breathe.

Lei Mubai cruelly smiled as he thrust a palm towards Mu Xiaoqing.

In the moment that the Blood Prison erupted forth, Lin Ming suddenly remembered something.

When Lin Ming had first swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal to break into the Tempering Marrow boundary, he had seen a true illusion. This was the evil will that the Netherworld Great Emperor had left within the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal.

And the feeling that the Netherworld Great Emperor's soul had given him was somewhat similar to Lei Mubai's soul fluctuations!

Could it be...

Lin Ming was alarmed. After he had swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, he had borne witness to the endless war that followed. It had left a very deep impression within Lin Ming's mind.

The Netherworld Great Emperor was similar to an ancient

demon god. He held a large bloody red axe in his hand, the shaft over ten feet long and as thick as an arm. The axe blade was three feet wide, and with a single cut it was able to slice a devil in half! Every time he killed a devil, the Netherworld Great Emperor would drink its blood!

Until now, Lin Ming wasn't able to understand what the devils that the Netherworld Great Emperor killed were. These devils were naked, their skin a dark blue and gray metallic color, their entire bodies threaded with thick and angry muscles. Their entire bodies were clasped with large hoops, and there were even those that were wrapped in chains. They had devilish, exaggerated features and were incomparably ugly beings. They weren't human at all.

As for the Netherworld Great Emperor, he was actually over 10 feet tall. His hair was a deep red, his skin a pale blue, and pupils a dark gold.

Although he had the face of a human, his height, skin, eyes... could there really be humans that grew up into that sort of appearance?

Lin Ming could never be sure if the Netherworld Great Emperor was human or not. Or perhaps, was this appearance the result of deeply cultivating the devil arts?

At the time, this scene had etched itself onto Lin Ming's heart.

The Netherworld Great Emperor's great axe pointed to the

heavens, his feet stepped upon the earth. Within the universe, he alone ruled all! This overwhelmingly lordly spirit had caused Lin Ming's heart to race.

And now, Lin Ming had truly felt the same kind of energy coming from Lei Mubai's body.

This was demon energy... although it was very faint, there was no way he was wrong!

Was he... the descendant of the Netherworld Great Emperor?

This thought suddenly appeared in Lin Ming's heart, leaving him absentminded for a moment.

If he was the descendant of the Netherworld Great Emperor, then what sort of concept would that be?

Was he... someone from the South Sea Demon Region!?!?

As Lin Ming thought of this possibility, all sorts of scenarios flashed in his mind. From Lei Jingtian's destruction of the proposed alliance, to his self-confident smile, to when he had even supported Lei Mubai to propose marriage to Divine Phoenix Island... and all the way to now, Lei Mubai had even used the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder!

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder didn't have a problem in itself. Although it was considered evil, the evil factions within

the Sky Spill Continent weren't too clear. For instance, the Seven Profound Valleys' Acacia Faction and Puppet Faction both practiced devil arts. As for Lin Ming, his Heretical God Force wasn't an orthodox ability either.

But with the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder added with all the previous issues, Lin Ming had a guess!

And that was that this pale youth's real name wasn't Lei Mubai. In fact, that was just an alias he used within the Thundercrest Sect. He was most likely a very important character within the South Sea Demon Region!

There was too much at stake on this speculation; even Lin Ming couldn't easily confirm it.

If he were right, then there would be nothing left of Lei Mubai. But if he were wrong, it would create a horrible mess. It might even cause the Thundercrest Sect to ally with the South Sea Demon Region!

Lin Ming suppressed his desire to tell Mu Qianyu of his guess. Instead, he calmed his mind and closed himself off until there was nothing left but his sense, using this to observe each and every action of Lei Mubai.

On the stage, Lei Mubai and Mu Xiaoqing's battle was reaching its conclusion. Mu Xiaoqing was obviously not anywhere near being Lei Mubai's match. She was stuck within the Blood Prison, and was completely unable to free herself.

As Lin Ming compared the aura that Lei Mubai emitted to the residual will of the Netherworld Great Emperor within the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, he was increasingly sure that this Lei Mubai had a very close relation with the Netherworld Great Emperor, and was most likely a descendant of some sort. At the very least, he would be a person who cultivated the same kinds of devil arts as the Netherworld Great Emperor!

The South Sea Demon Region was at war with Divine Phoenix Island and would soon invade. Now, Lei Mubai had suddenly appeared at this time. In addition to all of Lei Jingtian's various actions, this was enough to confirm the relation between Lei Mubai and the South Sea Demon Region. Otherwise, how could there be such a perfect coincidence in this world?

As Lin Ming made up his mind, he opened his eyes.

At this time, he witnessed Lei Mubai's final strike.

Bang!

The crimson blood claw burst apart. Mu Xiaoqing spat out a mouthful of blood, and she flew backwards like a broken kite, her face paler than paper.

This was the home of Divine Phoenix Island. No matter how brave Lei Mubai was, he still wouldn't dare to suck out Mu Xiaoqing's blood essence. But this level of injury was enough for her to be bedridden for at least ten days.

The truth was that being bedridden for 10 days wasn't too big of a deal. The crux of the issue was that Mu Xiaoqing's confidence had suffered a heavy blow. In the future, this could possibly affect her cultivation.

Mu Yuhuang was pale. No matter how she justified matters, in this case her disciple was simply weaker, thus she had been humiliated. There was nothing she could say. Otherwise this so-called competition of learning from each other was meaningless.

Lei Mubai wickedly smiled at Mu Xiaoqing. Then, he swept his eyes across the entire audience. "Who's next?"

All of the Divine Phoenix Island disciples had extremely ugly complexions. Their hearts were filled with extreme resentment, and they wished that they could rip apart this Lei Mubai. But this time, who would dare to go up? That would simply be disgracing themselves!

Lei Mubai smiled as he glanced at Mu Dingshan. As for Lin Ming, he wanted to save him for last. The one that was the greatest eyesore to him here was Lin Ming.

"Brother Dingshan, if you don't come up then how can we have a match?"

Mu Dingshan's expression was pale. He tightly clenched his fists together. Ever since he was born, when had he been oppressed like this? Someone was looking down their nose at him, openly

provoking him, and yet he was helpless in this situation.

However, this time, he had to step up no matter what. In the end, he was the elder senior-apprentice brother of all the direct disciples. He grit his teeth, and was about to step onto the stage when he was stopped by a firm hand on his shoulder.

He turned and saw that the one who stopped him was Lin Ming.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Mu, I’ll do it.” Lin Ming frankly said. There was much at stake. Through an actual battle, he would be able to more precisely determine Lei Mubai’s true identity.

Mu Dingshan’s heart filled with a tender and touching emotion as he looked at Lin Ming. This Lei Mubai was simply too strong. Even Saint rank talents were separated by the disparity in their talents. He feared that this Lei Mubai was much stronger than Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun when they were at this age.

Even if Lin Ming was also a Saint rank talent, he was just 16 and a half years old. Not only that, but there was a great gap in their cultivation. Mu Dingshan didn’t believe that Lin Ming had the assurance to deal with Lei Mubai.

Lei Mubai had defeated Mu Xiaoqing and hadn’t even used his weapon. Who knew what else he had up his sleeve. He was simply an unfathomable character. There was no way that Lin Ming was able to completely understand the enemy’s full strength. In order to challenge Lei Mubai, one needed have considerable courage. But, since this competition had progressed to this stage, a loss

would be a great blow to one's confidence.

Could Lin Ming win?

To Mu Dingshan, this hope was too faint and uncertain.

He heartily patted Lin Ming's shoulder, a bit like he was stepping onto an execution stage. "Brother Lin, please be silent. You are the last hope of my Divine Phoenix Island, so let me go up first. My cultivation is higher than Xiaoqing's, so I should be able to test out some of the cards he has in his hand. With that, it will be easier for you to deal with him."

Lin Ming faintly smiled, no longer attempting to persuade Mu Dingshan. Instead, he took out his Purple Comet Spear and directly leapt onstage.

"Divine Phoenix Island's Lin Ming, please advise!"

Chapter 382 – Thunder Soul Clash

As Lin Ming leapt onstage, he immediately aroused the attention and cries of the audience. Everyone fell silent, their breath abated; all of them had been waiting for this battle between the two greatest talents of the Five Element Region and the South Horizon Region.

However, everyone also thought it was very unfortunate that Lin Ming and Lei Mubai weren't on the same level. For one at the late Pulse Condensation period to go against someone at the early Houtian realm... that wasn't a small gap at all.

“Lin Ming, this damn fellow, he's just disgracing himself.” At the Thundercrest Sect banquet area, Zhou Xiaoling was glaring at Lin Ming with resentment in her eyes. She raised her fists that were covered in soy sauce, waiting for Lin Ming to be defeated.

As for Zhou Lie, he helplessly looked at his little sister. He thought that after Lei Mubai had proposed marriage to Divine Phoenix Island, Zhou Xiaoling would drop whatever fond desires she held towards Lei Mubai. But, it seemed as if she hadn't changed her mind about him at all. He had no idea what she was thinking.

“Lin Ming isn't so simple...” Zhou Lie said. “We have already underestimated him once, do not underestimate him again.”

“Humph! Just you want and see!” Zhou Xiaoling didn't bother to argue, she was a staunch supporter of Lei Mubai.

Zhou Lie shook his head. Although he couldn't help but admit that in comparison to Lei Mubai, Lin Ming was sorely lacking. If another year passed and Lin Ming stepped into the Houtian realm, then they would be able to see a fierce competition. But this had happened far too early!

He too hoped that Lin Ming would win, but this hope was very faint. Whether it was Lei Mubai or Lin Ming, neither of them had displayed their true and complete strength. But comparatively speaking, Lei Mubai was much more profound and unfathomable. In front of him, Mu Xiaoqing didn't even have the strength to resist!

.....

“Lin Ming, you are too impatient. I was prepared to face you last, but I didn't think that you would be the second to come onstage.” Lei Mubai looked at Lin Ming as he leapt onstage, his arms crossed behind his back. From his entire body he emitted an arrogant attitude, that of someone who held complete confidence in themselves, and looked at all the heroes of the world with nothing but disdain. As a Saint rank talent from a fifth-grade sect, facing Lin Ming, who was not only from a fourth-grade sect but also had a lower cultivation, he naturally looked at him with contempt.

“I had originally wanted to experience the many chief disciples of the Five Element Region one at a time. After all, this sort of event to compete against so many masters is a very rare occasion. But because some matters have occurred, I've changed my mind.” A faint smile touched upon Lin Ming's lips, a deep meaning behind

it.

Lei Mubai frowned. He didn't know why Lin Ming was smiling, but this smiling expression caused him to feel disgust. "You think that you have a chance of winning? You don't seem to have realized the situation you're in!"

Lin Ming shook his head. "No, it's just the opposite. You haven't realized what situation you're in."

Lin Ming spoke, but at this time, Lei Mubai ignored him. Lei Mubai only thought that Lin Ming was trying to provoke him.

"Haha! I haven't realized my situation? It looks like you're quite confident in yourself." Lei Mubai suddenly took his hands out, then clenched his fists. An enormous force arose within him, and a thick true essence emerged, nearly substantial. It spilled out like mercury, crushing all the stone tiles of the floor and sending them flying back with true essence.

"What a thick true essence!"

The hearts of everyone present at the banquet were shocked. Was this true essence something that an early Houtian martial artist could have? If they let out their perception, they would be able to feel a thick swirling vortex of true essence with Lei Mubai at the center. It was hard to believe that he was just at the early Houtian realm.

“Words are useless.” Facing Lei Mubai’s true essence that swept out at him, Lin Ming’s clothes fluttered in the air. Lin Ming grasped the Purple Comet Spear, pointing it towards the ground, his indifferent eyes touched with a hint of scorn.

“Your eyes really disgust me. Make your move. I’ll have a look to see whether or not you can force me to use my weapon!” Lei Mubai’s hands gathered together and the dazzling Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder sparked within his palms.

Chi chi chi!

Lin Ming narrowed his eyes as he stared at the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder. He sneered in his heart, ‘If you were a true Thundercrest Sect disciple, I wouldn’t be able to take anything from you. But since you’re not, don’t blame me for stripping you of everything you have!’

“Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky!”

Lin Ming suddenly stepped forwards, a luminous flame burning across his entire body. It was like the mountains and rivers had erupted; he thrust a spear towards Lei Mubai’s chest! Under this spear, the space around it seemed to tighten, a flame phoenix swirling around it. Flames surrounded Lei Mubai!

“This is your move? Too bad, it’s useless against me!” Lei Mubai’s demeanor was calm. He lifted his palms and launched the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder. In an instant, it vanished and turned into a pair of bloody netherworld blood claws that shot

towards the flame phoenix.

Bang!

The blood claws and the flame phoenix collided. The blood claws latched onto the flame phoenix's wings, dispersing the fire. The blood claws issued a 'chi chi chi' sound as plumes of blue smoke spewed into the air.

“Die!”

Lei Mubai gave a loud shout and suddenly twisted his hands, the blood claws following. There was a sad and shrill phoenix cry that pierced the air, and Lin Ming's flame phoenix was ripped in half by Lei Mubai!

The hearts of the Divine Phoenix Island disciples suddenly skipped a beat, even Mu Dingshan's expression changed. Lin Ming's Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky had been so easily broken!

“I said it was useless!” Lei Mubai jeered. But at this time, his smile froze on his face. After he tore apart Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky, a purple light split the smoke, shooting towards him at an incredible speed!

This needle was two inches long, and a Purple Flood Dragon coiled around the shaft. This was the coiling dragon steel needle!

“Mm? This is...!”

Lei Mubai was beyond shocked. He could feel in that purple light a thunder origin energy that had been compressed to an extreme degree!

“Thunder Soul!?”

Lei Mubai flew backwards, but the purple light followed him. No matter how fast he was, how could he compare to the speed of that coiling dragon steel needle?

As Lei Mubai saw the coiling dragon steel needle about to stab him between the eyebrows, he gave a shout and swiped at his spatial ring, pulling out a deep red blood halberd! This halberd had a nine foot long shaft and a foot long blade edge. It was a deep crimson like fresh blood, and its murderous aura soared into the sky. It was just like a terribly vicious beast all over, causing those who saw it to feel a deep and abiding fear.

Lei Mubai gripped the blood halberd and instantly slashed down at the coiling dragon steel needle.

In that moment, it was like the entire space was blocked by the blood halberd, and the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder was trapped within. The blood halberd carried a vast and endless violent momentum as it fiercely chopped down.

Bang!

The Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder was cut by the blood halberd. Countless arcs of purple thunder splashed out, like purple snakes chaotically writhing in the air. Lei Mubai bore the brunt of this shock and his entire body was numbed by electricity. But Lin Ming was no better. His mind was connected to the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder, and when it was cut he had turned pale.

Lin Ming waved his right hand, and the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder that possessed an intelligent will flew back towards Lin Ming, revolving within his hand.

Lei Mubai held the halberd, standing his ground. He looked at the small steel needle in Lin Ming's hand, and tumultuous waves surged in his heart.

It wasn't just Lei Mubai, but the eyes of everyone in the audience were fixed upon that normal looking steel needle.

Most of them didn't know what this coiling dragon steel needle was. They could only marvel at the power of this small object. "It looks like Lin Ming's strength is greater than I anticipated. He might have the ability to fight with Lei Mubai. But, that is only to fight. As for what will happen, that will all depend on how much strength Lei Mubai is still hiding..."

A Deep Earth Sect disciple analyzed the situation with an air of self-importance. But this analysis only caused the surrounding Thundercrest Sect disciples to glare at him with derision.

'You idiot!'

A Thundercrest Sect thought in his heart. As disciples of the Thundercrest Sect, they naturally recognized what this coiling dragon steel needle was. It was a low-grade earth-step Thunder Soul!

It contained an extremely terrifying compressed thunder origin energy. In this aspect, it was far superior to the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder!

“A boy with a late Pulse Condensation cultivation was actually able to absorb a low-grade earth-step Thunder Soul? How is this possible!?” Zhou Lie cried out. He was unable to accept this. He was well aware of how difficult and painful it was to absorb a Thunder Soul of that level!

With his Houtian realm cultivation and also with the support of many of the Thundercrest Sect’s treasures, Zhou Lie had managed to jump ranks and absorb a high-grade human-step Thunder Soul. But the pain that followed had him wanting to kill himself. Finally, he had broken through his limits and forcefully absorbed it!

Zhou Lie thought that he had achieved the ultimate heaven-defying act, and was pleased with his talent. But afterwards, he had discovered that Lei Mubai had absorbed a low-grade earth-step Thunder Soul with his Houtian cultivation, and suffered a heavy blow to his self-esteem.

But as Zhou Lie thought that Lei Mubai was an existence that had a chance of becoming a Peerless Emperor in the future, he was just

able to accept this reality. But now, it seemed that Lin Ming with his mere late Pulse Condensation cultivation had actually managed to absorb a low-grade earth-step Thunder Soul! Heavens! Was he really a human!?

Zhou Xiaoling stared with wide eyes. It was also because of the act of absorbing a Thunder Soul that her admiration of Lei Mubai had risen so high. But now in just a few days, that act had actually been surpassed by Lin Ming! She also found this hard to accept. In her eyes, Lei Mubai was the most talented and gifted individual in the world – it was impossible for anyone to exceed him. But now, it looked like Lin Ming had already eclipsed him.

Within the Divine Phoenix Island banquet area, Mu Qianyu bore witness to the intense and violent reaction from the Thundercrest Sect disciples, and her lips curved up in a satisfied smile. ‘These fellows are already so surprised. If they knew that Lin Ming had already absorbed the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder over half a year ago, and that his cultivation had only been at the peak Bone Forging stage when he did so, just what sort of reactions would they have? Now that Lin Ming’s cultivation has reached the late Pulse Condensation period, with a sect’s help he might even be able to absorb a medium-grade earth-step Thunder Soul!’

“I never thought this was possible, I never expected this at all.” Lei Mubai shook his head. “I really underestimated you! I have to admit that you have the qualifications to make me a bit serious, but that is also only a bit more serious!”

Lin Ming smiled, a light laugh touching his lips. This idiot, he was knocking on death’s door and yet he still felt so smug about

himself. This was also the reason that so many other geniuses died like dogs. Pride blinded their eyes and arrogance blinded their hearts, letting them believe that everything was under their control.

But the truth was that he couldn't blame Lei Mubai. In this situation, he would also never have imagined that his identity was seen through by Lin Ming.

If there was anything to blame, one could only blame Lei Mubai for having such bad luck.

Since ancient times, Peerless Emperors were existences that had a heaven-defying talent as well as a great destiny that gathered unto their bodies. Lei Mubai's talent was satisfactory, but it was a pity that he had no great destiny to follow him. Instead, what had fallen upon him was a calamity. Unfortunately, in this life, he had now encountered Lin Ming. And what was most tragic was that he never would have dreamt that Lin Ming had swallowed a Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, and that within that Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was the blood essence of the Netherworld Great Emperor. As for Lei Mubai, the Netherworld Great Emperor bloodline that he was so proud of and that he had hidden, had actually been recognized by Lin Ming.

Lei Mubai slapped the blood halberd and held it across his chest. In that instant, a fierce and violent energy broke forth. This was a top medium-grade earth-step treasure.

“This halberd is a desolate and dangerous treasure – it is a replica of the Forsaken Blood Halberd. Although it is a replica, it has been

tempered through a thousand years and stained with the blood of countless lives. I'm anticipating that today this halberd will drink freely of your blood!"

Chapter 383 – Great Desolate Blood Halberd

Forsaken Blood Halberd replica?

Even Lin Ming, who didn't know much about the top sects of the Sky Spill Continent, had heard the fierce name of this Forsaken Blood Halberd. The Forsaken Blood Halberd's former name was the Great Desolate Blood Halberd, and it was a heaven-step treasure that was excavated from an ancient ruin. It was 10 feet long, as thick as an arm, and blood red all over.

It was rumored that this halberd was a high-grade heaven-step treasure.

The original master and creator of this Great Desolate Blood Halberd had long been lost in the vast stretches of time. But it was known that this halberd had existed at least 70 or 80 thousand years ago.

Afterwards, the Great Desolate Blood Halberd was spread through the Sky Spill Continent and passed through several owners. Of those who held this weapon in hand, it could be said that any of these characters were masters that could shake the world, among which were many Peerless Emperors!

However, this blood halberd was simply too dangerous and portentous a treasure. According to the ancient records, everyone that had ever possessed the Great Desolate Blood Halberd eventually died a miserable and violent death. Even the so-called Peerless Emperors were no exception to this rule. It could be said

that their destiny which was described within the ancient texts wasn't enough, and they died to the curse of the blood halberd.

For instance, a thousand years ago the Netherworld Great Emperor had managed to obtain the Great Desolate Blood Halberd. Unfortunately, he perished under the hands of several Peerless Emperors.

Afterwards, this blood halberd was said to have been obtained by a Supreme Elder. But according to rumors, this Supreme Elder had gone into an ancient mystic realm and had been missing for hundreds of years. Until now, there still wasn't anyone that had a hint of where he was. Thus, the Great Desolate Blood Halberd had vanished along with him.

Humans were wonderful and contradictory creatures. The more ominous a treasure was, the more it would arouse the crazed envy of others. This was because many of them assumed that they were fated for great deeds, as if the heavens themselves had mandated that they would succeed. They believed that a great destiny had come to them and that they wouldn't die from the blood halberd's curse. The Great Desolate Blood Halberd even became a symbol of being a Peerless Emperor. Thus, replicas of this Great Desolate Blood Halberd had spread everywhere, and it wasn't unusual for a genius whose ambition was to one day become a Peerless Emperor to have one.

“So you also use a long weapon.” Lin Ming's expression was calm. Compared to the spear, the halberd head had many crescent blade tips that could be used to slash and kill. Those that wielded the spear could also wield the halberd.

“Hehe, allow me to remind you. With this blood halberd assisting me, my Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder can become 50% stronger!”

“Oh? What a coincidence. With the help of the Purple Comet Spear, my Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder can also display its greatest strength!”

As the two stared each other down, the young heroic elites present held their breaths, their hearts rapidly racing. This battle was far more wonderful than they had assumed. They thought it would be a one-sided match, but it had actually stayed even until now.

Such a fight was what these people desired to see the most. They opened their eyes wide, fearing that they would miss any of the exciting moments.

Lei Mubai swept out his blood halberd, and his aura suddenly erupted. The true essence within his body revolved to the limit and a thick bloody energy surged forth from his body.

Chi!

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder flowed into the Great Desolate Blood Halberd, the entire halberd shaft growing increasingly bright red as if it were dripping blood. The savage halberd blade began to issue out a keening cry!

“Blood War Throughout the World!”

Kacha!

The tiles under Lei Mubai’s feet suddenly shattered, cracks spreading throughout like a spiderweb. Lei Mubai waved his halberd, and a bloody storm twisted into existence, sucking in all the surrounding stone, tearing it to pieces!

Facing such a powerful attack, Lin Ming gripped the Purple Comet Spear. The spearpoint drew a crescent moon on the ground and began to howl. The coiling dragon steel needle had fused into the Purple Comet Spear. Spear and thunder became one, thunder flashed, arcs of lightning danced in the air.

Lin Ming thrust out his spear, the phantom of an Azure Dragon appearing behind him once again. With this strike, it carried a primal azure true essence as well as a massive snake of thunder that was as thick as a tree trunk. With a cry from the audience, this spear contained an unstoppable momentum as it thrust towards the bloody storm.

Bang bang bang!

A series of explosions sounded in the air. The bloody light mixed with the smashed tiles and the purple electric radiance. All of the stones within were smashed into dust. As the dust mixed into the bloody storm, it transformed into red sand!

The protective array formation that the Revolving Core master had laid down began to vibrate. Cracks appeared out of thin air, and with a light ‘chi chi chi’ sound, the protective curtain of light was punctured. A savage beam of true essence pierced through!

“Be careful!”

Everyone was shocked. Several Revolving Core Elders hurried to lay down a new enchantment. However, because it was too quick, the new enchantment wasn’t able to be instantly laid down. The electric light and true essence explosion shockwave flooded out, overturning the banquet tables and smashing apart the jade dishes!

All the heroic elites of the sects began to revolve true essence around their body to protect themselves. The ones with high cultivation protected those with low cultivation. As the true essence shockwave collided against their true essence, it created a rainbow of colors that dazzled everyone present.

“Who are these two!? The true essence shockwave from their battle can break open the protective array formation and also force our disciples to resist with all their strength!”

“This is too terrifying. Look over there. Even the Deep Earth Sect’s Houtian disciples who excel at defense find this difficult to resist. Can a Houtian master truly have strength of this level!?”

“What Houtian master? That Lin Ming is clearly at the Pulse Condensation period!” With these words, everyone felt as if they

were living a waking dream.

That's right! Lin Ming wasn't at the Houtian realm! He was even a step away from reaching the peak of Pulse Condensation!

Because of Lin Ming's strong and dominating performance, everyone had faintly forgotten the fact that Lin Ming wasn't a Houtian master. Just what was wrong with this world!

The ones most shocked were the Xiantian masters. As the backbone of their fourth-grade sects, they were above 30 years old, and there were even some around 40 or 50 years old.

"Such a strong attack power, is this really the strength of the younger generation? When I was at the peak Houtian realm, even I didn't have such abnormal attack power!" Those that were able to attend this banquet celebration weren't average martial artists. When they were at the Houtian realm, they were also outstanding martial artists that surpassed others.

"If this continues, they won't need much time to compare to a true Xiantian master! An early Houtian realm youth can actually compare to a Xiantian master; just how strong will they be in the future? They might even become Peerless Emperors!"

The difference between the Houtian realm and the Xiantian realm was like a moat that separated the two. As one stepped from the Houtian realm into the Xiantian realm, a martial artist would be reborn as they eliminated the foul Houtian air within themselves and experienced a qualitative change to their true

essence that greatly increased the intensity and thickness of it. The Xiantian realm was also considered a massive bottleneck. Every normal Houtian martial artist that had an unstable foundation would be stuck there forever; the only ones left that had a chance of ascending were the most outstanding of individuals. Even Qin Ziya, who was considered a top-class Houtian master, would only be the lowest of Xiantian powerhouses. This showed just how strong a Xiantian realm martial artist truly was.

Therefore it was especially difficult for a Houtian powerhouse to be able to jump realms and fight against a Xiantian master. Within a small sect like the Seven Profound Valleys, it was already good if there existed two or three people that could accomplish this. Not only that, but these two or three people would often be at the peak Houtian realm or even a half-step into the Xiantian realm.

On the stage, Lin Ming and Lei Mubai had already separated from each other. All of the tiles within a 100 foot radius of them had been completely demolished, and the spot where the two youths had collided had been turned into fine sand. After this sand was stained red by the blood essence within the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder, it had turned the center of the stage into a crimson desert.

Lei Mubai hadn't expected that Lin Ming would be powerful to such a degree. When he was Lin Ming's age, he didn't possess this strength – did that mean that Lin Ming's talent exceeded him?

Lei Mubai's heart had always been heavy with pride. How could he tolerate a fourth-grade sect genius ever surpassing him!

“I really underestimated you. But, my strength is far more than that! For you to be able to force me to use my true strength, that alone is enough for you to be proud of!”

The true essence within Lei Mubai’s body began to rapidly revolve. Within his meridians, the bloody energy became increasingly thick and concentrated. His entire skeleton began to crackle, and his aura exploded along with it, frightening everyone who sensed it!

Ancient devil arts!

Huu!

The space around Lei Mubai seemed to become its own separate space; his aura increased several times over!

What he was using was the power of the ancient Devil Tome that his master had found within far off ruins!

He didn’t fear using this cultivation method. This wasn’t a cultivation method of Silent Demon Emperor City, but rather a recently unearthed ancient cultivation method manual. Regardless of whether it was Mu Yuhuang of Mu Fengxian, neither of them would be able to recognize it.

Although this wasn’t an orthodox strength, the South Horizon Region sects had never distinguished between good or evil. Everything was based only on the respect for the strong. So, there

was nothing wrong with using this ancient devil art technique.

Even if there was something wrong with using this, he no longer cared. If he didn't defeat Lin Ming here, then he would only frustrate his own spirit!

“Mm? This cultivation method!” Mu Yuhuang's eyes shined. With the breadth of her knowledge, she was able to instantly recognize the uncommon and extraordinary nature of this cultivation method. This was obviously not the cultivation method of the Thundercrest Sect, and even if it was, it would be recently obtained by the Thundercrest Sect. There was even a high chance that it was this Lei Mubai who had found it!

“Master Ancestor, do you recognize this cultivation method?” Mu Yuhuang asked Mu Fengxian with a true essence sound transmission.

Mu Fengxian squinted her eyes as she looked at Lei Mubai, thoughtfully deliberating for a moment. Then, she hesitated and shook her head, “This cultivation method should have recently appeared in the world, this boy's lucky fortunes are very great!”

Mu Yuhuang let out a light breath and turned to glance at Lei Jingtian. She saw that his own eyes were shining with acclaim. Suddenly, Mu Yuhuang's heart went cold – there was an absolute chance that this cultivation method was found by Lei Mubai!

With such a great lucky opportunity falling upon him, she feared that Lei Mubai really might become an almighty Peerless Emperor!

Lei Mubai's ancient devil arts were truly amazing. But Lin Ming was indifferent. Among everyone present, there was no one who was more experienced in the highest level cultivation methods than him.

In the fragmented memories of the Realm of the Gods' Supreme Elders, there were countless incomplete cultivation methods, most of them being sporadic and fragmented worthless bits. But Lin Ming still looked over these one at a time. As he compared them to Lei Mubai's ancient devil arts, he came to the conclusion that these ancient devil arts were probably created by a Peerless Emperor that originated from the Sky Spill Continent.

Perhaps this Peerless Emperor died of old age or perhaps he soared up into the Realm of the Gods. Regardless of what happened, this cultivation method that he left behind as his legacy could only be considered the lowest third-rate cultivation method within the Realm of the Gods.

Under the shadow of the crimson light, Lei Mubai gripped the Great Desolate Blood Halberd, his clothes fluttering in the wind and his jet black hair recklessly flying. With the bloody lightning that twined around his entire body, he was like an ancient demon god that descended into the world.

Lei Mubai stood there, his aura filled with utter disdain for the world. All the young heroic elites felt that Lei Mubai was no different than a giant mountain that stood before him, an unattainable and distant existence. As for the young female disciples of the Five Element Region, their beautiful faces blushed

and their hearts wildly beat. As for Zhou Xiaoling, her eyes never left Lei Mubai for a second.

Zhou Lie saw the entranced expression on his younger sister's face and sighed. He didn't say anything further. Whether it was Lei Mubai or Lin Ming, they were both characters that had already surpassed the realm of his comprehension.

“Lin Ming! Do you still think you can defeat me!?”

Lei Mubai slowly said, his every word dripping with overbearing arrogance!

His strength had grown two-fold. If he used Blood War Throughout the World again, the power of that move would also be doubled!

Chapter 384 – Tempering Marrow VS Devil Arts

Facing the blazoning might of the ancient devil arts and the crazy Lei Mubai whose hair was bathed in a blood red light, Lin Ming was finally able to completely confirm that Lei Mubai was from the South Sea Demon Region.

‘The ancient devil arts can multiply one’s own strength?’ Lin Ming’s lips curved up in a smile, ‘If I hadn’t completed 20% of Tempering Marrow then I would absolutely have lost this battle. But now, Lei Mubai is able to have me fight to the limits of my strength! With 20% Tempering Marrow added together with the opening of the Heretical God Force, just what would the result be?’

Lin Ming gripped the Purple Comet Spear horizontally and stood tall on the stage, his body exuding a virtuous light. Suddenly, his aura began to thicken, becoming increasingly swift and fierce, and a spear intent that could sweep away all surged forth. At this moment, Lin Ming was like a unrivalled treasure spear, immeasurably keen. With a single thought, he could pierce through the world!

“Mm? Lin Ming’s aura is also intensifying!”

“It’s not only his aura that is intensifying, but the true essence in his body is becoming increasingly thick! Heavens! How can a Pulse Condensation period martial artist have such thick true essence within their body!?”

In this instant, everyone was able to clearly feel the vast aura emitting from Lin Ming's body like an endless ocean. His true essence was like the wild waves of a storm, boundless and infinite!

With just Lin Ming's meridians and acupoints, he was naturally unable to release such terrifying true essence. A great deal of Lin Ming's true essence had been hidden within his marrow, and now all of that hidden true essence had spewed out; the power of 20% of Tempering Marrow completely broke free!

On the banquet's seat of honor, Mu Fengxian's sleepy eyes suddenly popped open, an expression of disbelief coloring them. She quietly watched Lin Ming for several breaths of times, took a deep breath, and then said to herself, "This child is a dragon within a deep pool. If my Divine Phoenix Island has a great enough destiny and we are able to survive the incoming cataclysm to wait until the day that this dragon soars into the sky, my Divine Phoenix Island will also be a phoenix that rebirths through nirvana, soaring along with it..."

As Lin Ming's aura increased, all of the juniors beneath the stage stared with wide eyes. Their mouths were dry, and they watched with utter astonishment.

Lei Mubai couldn't bear it. As this aura rose, he was no longer willing to wait.

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder erupted. Lei Mubai cried out, "Blood Dyes the World!"

The blood halberd swept out. After this move broke forth, the aura of the stage suddenly changed, as if tumultuous and violent waves of blood were crashing around. Lei Mubai tread forwards, and his body was like a phantom as he instantly flashed in front of Lin Ming, his spear sweeping towards his waist.

This halberd strike carried a heavy, roaring potential. Even a small mountain peak would be crushed by this sweeping blow!

In the halberd, Lin Ming could feel all the blood of his body being pulled by an invisible force, rushing to the surface and boiling in his veins as if it would break out of his body!

‘This is the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder’s effect on blood essence? Lei Mubai has no intention of staying his hand at all. If a normal martial artist were to be swept by this halberd, their blood would flow backwards and they would have already died from shock!’

Lin Ming’s mind raced. The coiling dragon steel needle had fused into the Purple Comet Spear, and now the spear seemed to contain its own indelible will. A spear swept out, and because of the instant acceleration, the Purple Comet Spear slightly bent like a whip as he crashed into the blood halberd.

Kacha!

As soon as the blood halberd collided with the Purple Comet Spear, the blood halberd was suppressed. It was like a blood red massive shark that was abruptly pressed down in the water!

The Purple Comet Spear pressed down on the Great Desolate Blood Halberd! The compressed blood vitality of the halberd broke free, creating crashing waves of vibrant blood!

The two young masters struggled, their spear and halberd clashing with each other as red and purple thunder sizzled the air.

The impact of the intense purple and red true essence formed a howling tornado. The tornado picked up the countless crushed stones on the ground, and sent them shooting towards the protective light array enchantment.

Ping ping ping!

The reinforced light screen severely trembled once more.

The complexions of all the heroic elites changed, especially the Xiantian realm martial artists'. They were all frightened, unable to comprehend what was happening. With two juniors fighting, their auras were actually filled with the power of crushing avalanches and tsunamis. Was this really battle between two of the younger generation?

Lei Mubai clenched his teeth, all of the muscles of his body bulging, his blue veins popping up. He had no choice but to admit that Lin Ming had the qualifications to fight him on equal standing!

‘This boy, his true essence is as thick as my own even after I used the ancient devil arts; how is this possible!? A frontal attack is not possible, I have to avoid his Purple Comet Spear and only attack his body.’

As Lei Mubai thought this, he suddenly rapidly dashed around, his footwork accelerating. As he stepped back, his form began erratic, drifting from place to place. The blood halberd in his hand also became a series of blood shades!

“You want to compare speed?” Lin Ming’s smirked. Lei Mubai was not a martial artist who specialized in speed like Jiang Baoyun. If he wanted to have a battle of speed, then he was not afraid. Not to mention that his comprehension of the Concept of Wind deepened with every day, and his Golden Roc Shattering the Void also drew closer to the second layer with every passing day. Soon, it would break through to the next level!

Ca!

Lei Mubai appeared like a ghost behind Lin Ming, his halberd cutting down. However, this halberd directly cut through Lin Ming’s waist, but passed straight through. At this moment, Lin Ming had vanished, leaving nothing behind by an afterimage!

It was just an instant, but Lin Ming had already moved dozens of feet away. “You are fast, but your weapon is a halberd. A halberd is not suited for speed!”

Lei Mubai’s pale face darkened. In terms of speed, a halberd was

naturally inferior to a sword. This was common knowledge. But now, since he couldn't directly confront Lin Ming, he could only compare his speed. "I don't need you to teach me anything!"

Lin Ming sneered, and suddenly a invisible cyclone of wind formed around his body, propping him up. After he had exposed his ability to fly, he had no more need to conceal the secret of Golden Roc Shattering the Void. "How skillful. In terms of speed, I too am confident in myself!"

On the stage, forceful gales rampaged through the air. Lin Ming stepped forwards with Golden Roc Shattering the Void, and his body became a series of phantom images. With the Concept of Wind fused into the Purple Comet Spear, every spear strike contained a whistling wind origin energy.

In that moment, Lin Ming's spear shade turned into wind, and the wind became the spear shade. It could not be dispersed, it could not be avoided!

Hu!

Hu!

Suddenly, all of the red and purple lightning on the stage was swept up into a massive vortex, Lin Ming and Lei Mubai disappearing together.

"Where are they?"

“There’s only the afterimage left, I can’t see them!”

Those whose cultivation was below the Houtian realm had already lost track of Lin Ming and Lei Mubai’s shadows. Even the Houtian realm disciples found it hard to see just where they were.

Zhan Yunjian took a deep breath, sighing as emotion filled his heart. So this power was that of the Kings of the younger generation? Perhaps in his entire life he would never be able to surpass them!

“Their strength can actually compare to a Xiantian master!”

Within the banquet area of Golden Bell Mountain, an early Xiantian master shook his head, overwhelmed by the scene in front of him.

“Before, I had thought that their strength was slightly better than when I was at the Houtian realm, but it seems that now, even I don’t dare to say that I could defeat them!”

.....

“Blood Scattering Endless Sky!”

Lei Mubai gripped the Great Desolate Blood Halberd and smashed down. With an explosion, a massive hole dozens of feet deep was

created within the stage. However, Lin Ming had already dodged early, avoiding this attack. Even so, the blood within his body still violently tumbled within him.

“This fellow is too strong!” Lin Ming forcefully suppressed his surging blood. He still had his two final cards: the Heretical God Force and Thunderfire Annihilation. However, these two moves could only be used once, and he had to do so wisely. Otherwise, if he missed or failed, he would instantly be defeated!

Lei Mubai grinned. “You’ve forced me to this point. Now that the battle has reached this stage, even if I have to sacrifice my strength I will still cut you underneath my halberd!”

As Lei Mubai spoke, the skin all over his body began to crack open with a ‘ka ka’ sound. Clouds of bloody fog ruptured forth from these cracks.

“Blood Shadow Avatar!”

As Lei Mubai cried out, the blood fog actually turned into a red human’s shadow that took Lei Mubai’s form. This shadow had no weapon. Instead, there was a long devil claw that was its hand.

Lin Ming was surprised but he didn’t panic. He had already seen a similar attack method at the Seven Profound Valleys’ Total Faction Martial Meeting.

“Go! Suck dry his blood essence!”

The crimson Blood Shadow Avatar uttered a shrill scream, and then reached out its giant claw towards Lin Ming.

Lin Ming appeared calm. He moved with Golden Roc Shattering the Void and his figure instantly drew back. At the same time, the Purple Comet Spear in his hand flashed with thunder. The power of thunder was the most effective counter to demons and ghost. He didn't believe that this Blood Shadow Avatar would be able to block the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder.

“Your opponent is me!”

Lei Mubai's cold words resounded within Lin Ming's ears. At the same time, the Great Desolate Blood Halberd slashed down!

Pincer attack?

Lin Ming frowned. The Purple Comet Spear in his hand thrust forth to meet the Great Desolate Blood Halberd!

Dang!

As the spear and halberd collided, the blood essence within Lin Ming's body roiled and his true essence went into disorder. As for Lei Mubai, his organs were violently shaken by the azure true essence and his face turned ashen.

“Ahh!”

At this moment, the Blood Shadow Avatar cried and extended its claw. The claw grasped at Lin Ming's throat!

But at this time, Lin Ming's Purple Comet Spear was already thrust out. He would not be able to pull it back in time and then thrust out again!

At this crucial moment, Lin Ming's right hand released the Purple Comet Spear. A deep azure light formed on his fist, carrying the power of thunder. This fist punched towards the Blood Shadow Avatar's blood claw!

“Humph, you are seeking death!” Lei Mubai grinned like a demon. The Blood Shadow Avatar's claw was as hard as a divine weapon; its toughness was comparable to a low-grade earth-step treasure. To use a flesh and blood fist to meet this claw was no different than courting death!

“Body Tearing Bone Shattering Fist!”

In that moment, Lin Ming's true essence revolved to the limit. 10,000 vibrating true essence filaments roared forth, carrying the integrated power of the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder as well as the power of the 20% completed Tempering Marrow. This strike contained his full strength!

Bang!

Lin Ming's fist smashed into the Blood Shadow Avatar's claw. The power of vibration and the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder erupted. There was a loud 'chi chi chi' sound as the blood claw was ignited by the thunder before it suddenly exploded into a bloody fog!

“What!?”

Lei Mubai's mind shook and then he spat out a mouthful of blood. The Blood Shadow Avatar was connected to his body – if it took damage, so would he!

As Lei Mubai spat blood, he kneeled on the floor, a looked of incredible disbelief in his eyes as he stared at Lin Ming. How was this possible? A bare human fist had shattered the Blood Shadow Avatar's demon claw!?

“Lei Mubai is injured!”

“Heavens! This is too fearful. Lei Mubai's strength is already so terrifying, but he was actually severely wounded by Lin Ming!?”

All of the young heroic elites present sucked in a deep breath.

Everyone believed that Lei Mubai had been hiding his strength, but no one imagined that he would be so strong.

However, what was even more unbelievable was that this amazingly strong Lei Mubai was actually severely wounded by Lin Ming!

Chapter 385 – Battle of Kings

The entire audience was shocked speechless. No one imagined that the battle between the Kings of the younger generation would be at such a terrifying level.

The stage floor underneath the two youths' feet had been strengthened by an array formation, becoming as hard as iron. But now, it was all left in ruins.

Lei Mubai's Blood Shadow Avatar that he released had been destroyed by Lin Ming, causing him to spit out a mouthful of blood. His injuries were definitely serious. Although Lin Ming wasn't wounded, his face was very pale; obviously, he had also consumed a great deal of blood vitality.

Originally, with Lin Ming's astonishing recovery ability, this wouldn't be a problem. But Lei Mubai's extremely strange moves were able to affect the blood essence within Lin Ming's body, causing it to tumble within him. In order to suppress the roiling blood essence, he had to waste a massive amount of energy – and that was why he was exhausted to this degree.

“Lin Ming's hand is also injured!”

The audience discovered that Lin Ming's right hand was slicked red with blood. Obviously, this was the result of the collision from a moment ago!

“His fist was injured when he shattered the blood claw.”

“This is normal in such a violent collision. After all, Lin Ming doesn’t practice fist fighting nor did he bring any treasure gloves.”

All of the heroic elites present expressed their views. But as Lei Mubai heard these, he could only grimly smile.

Normal!?

Lin Ming didn’t practice fist fighting?

Didn’t bring treasure gloves?

This group of idiots knew nothing!

Besides Lei Mubai, no one was aware of just how terrifyingly hard the Blood Shadow Avatar’s demon claw was. It was able to compare to a low-grade earth-step treasure!

If Lin Ming was able to crush it with his fist, did that mean that his fist was comparable to a low-grade earth-step treasure?

How was this possible!?

Lei Mubai took a deep breath, his eyes glimmering as he looked at Lin Ming.

“Lin Ming, you are the strongest junior that I have ever met in my life. I have an incomparable desire... and that is to personally destroy you!” Lei Mubai grinned, showing his white teeth within his bloodstained mouth, his expression still grim and savage.

“You want to destroy me, and I want to destroy you. Not just that, but perhaps I will kill you much sooner.” Lin Ming wiped off the blood from his right hand, his expression cold and resolute. His words revealed his murderous intent, he had no desire to hide the fact that he wished to kill Lei Mubai.

“Haha! You want to destroy me? Good, then I will give you the chance! I didn’t think that I would be compelled to use my final card in this battle. I will use my own blood essence as the price to make this attack. After I use this move, if you cannot block it, you will die!”

A move that costs one’s own blood essence?

Lin Ming’s eyebrows curved up. Blood essence was extremely important to martial artists. Even if Lei Mubai swallowed other martial artists with the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder, this didn’t mean that he could easily waste his own blood essence. If this move cost him his own blood essence, it would surely be Lei Mubai’s strongest attack.

This would also be his final move!

“Lin Ming...” Mu Qianyu sat behind Mu Yuhuang, her lips slightly trembling. Now that the battle had come to this point, it

was a life and death match between two great geniuses. Even they wouldn't be able to control their own strength, and neither would they want to. Once this match was decided, one could be severely wounded or even crippled.

However, this time, it was clearly unrealistic to ask them to settle this with a truce.

“Yu’er, don’t worry. With the High Ancestor here, there won’t be a problem.” Mu Yuhuang noticed Mu Qianyu’s anxious expression and rapidly beating heart, and knew what she was worrying about.

“Mm...” Mu Qianyu nodded, slightly calming down.

.....

As these two young Kings were about to make their final blows in this desperate battle, all of the martial artists present held their breath. Not to mention the young heroic elites, even the old Revolving Core masters were the same, staring with round eyes as they gazed at the center of the stage, none of them daring to miss a single second of this exciting match.

On the stage, the two fighting in this match had the possibility of becoming future Peerless Emperors! So this was a match between two young Peerless Emperors! This battle was destined to be written down in the ancient texts, left behind as a legacy for future generations, lasting tens of thousands of years from now!

Who could miss such a grand event!?

On the stage, strong winds blew, blood sand drifted into the sky.

“Hah!”

The Blood Shadow Avatar that was severely wounded by Lin Ming merged into Lei Mubai's body, melting into him. As this happened, a strange blood red color emerged over Lei Mubai's body.

“Blood Prison Descends!”

Lei Mubai gave a loud shout, and his aura started to become increasingly wild, increasingly manic, surging forth with a monstrous wave. His entire body was wrapped with red lightning, his long hair fluttering in the wind.

His foot stepped upon the bloodstained sand, his blood halberd directed straight towards the endless skies!

At this moment, he was like a descended demon god, insufferably arrogant, above all others!

Lin Ming let out a light breath; no wonder this Lei Mubai had been so rampant, he actually had so many cards in his hand. With one killer move after another, it was hard to find a martial artist at this level that could defeat him.

This Blood Prison Descends took one's own blood essence as the price in exchange for doubling one's strength. This was a move that damaged oneself at the cost of damaging the enemy even more.

In this situation, Lin Ming no longer planned to withhold anything anymore. In this final strike, he didn't need to care about how much true essence he consumed. He could use everything he had, putting forth his complete strength to meet this strike of Lei Mubai's.

“Heretical God Force – open!”

Bang!

The highly compressed true essence within the Heretical God Seed erupted. Lin Ming's aura soared again, and his thick true essence was like a dangerous, unstoppable force of nature. In that instance, his momentum was like an unstoppable spear light, piercing the skies!

“What!?”

“Impossible!”

“His aura increased again, and his true essence has strengthened by another 60 to 70%! At this time, Lin Ming was still hiding such a massively great strength!?”

The shock that Lin Ming had created was too great. Even Mu Fengxian's expression changed. This turn of events was even more startling than Lei Mubai. Lei Mubai had burnt his own blood essence in exchange for strength, but Lin Ming hadn't done so at all. This was only the compressed true essence that had been hiding within his body!

“How can a Pulse Condensation period martial artist hold so much true essence within himself? Is his body a bottomless pit!?”

Everyone present, from the young heroic elites to the old Revolving Core masters all stared with eyes wide, filled with shock and disbelief.

A Xiantian martial artist shook his head, ruefully smiling, “Can he really be considered a Pulse Condensation martial artist? The thickness of his true essence is already equal to mine.”

For a Pulse Condensation martial artist's true essence to be as thick as a Xiantian master's... this was simply unthinkable. If he hadn't confirmed with his own eyes that a true essence vortex hadn't formed within Lin Ming's dantian yet, he would rather die than believe Lin Ming was only at the trivial late Pulse Condensation period.

“However, although the strength that Lin Ming has been hiding is impressive, it is still worse than Lei Mubai's!”

A Golden Bell Mountain disciple evaluated as he compared the

auras of Lin Ming and Lei Mubai. The strength that Lin Ming had now was inferior to the strength that Lei Mubai had obtained at the cost of burning his own blood essence.

After all, that was blood essence; one would forever lose what they burnt away.

Now, Lei Mubai's hair was crazy and his momentum filled the skies, his strength had approximately doubled. As for Lin Ming, his spear intent spread through the world, sharp and keen. But in terms of his momentum, it was slightly worse – his strength had increased by about 60 to 70%.

Originally, their strength had been about the same. But now after they increased their strength, a gap was immediately opened up between them!

“Lin Ming is in danger!”

“This is Lei Mubai's final move with everything he has. If he cannot block it, Lin Ming will be seriously injured or even crippled!”

The Divine Phoenix Island disciples held their breath. The young female girls that had a favorable impression towards Lin Ming felt their hearts hanging in their throats. Their beautiful eyes were wide and unblinking, lest they miss what was about to happen.

Mu Qianyu let out a light breath as she folded her hands together,

her grip tightening. She prayed in her heart, ‘Lin Ming, please, don’t let anything happen to you.’

Lei Mubai’s mouth was full of blood. Because of the constant and insufferable pain from the blood vessels in his body rupturing, his face was bleak and ghastly. “Lin Ming! I never imagined that you would still be holding a final finishing move in your hand. Your strength truly shocks me to an endless degree. But, this is as far as you go! In the end, your final card is inferior to mine!

Because of the combustion of his blood essence, Lei Mubai’s voice had changed. It was hoarse and deep, as if he were laboring for breath. He slowly and clearly spoke, enunciating every syllable, “Take my final strike. Demon – King – Descends!”

As he spoke these words, Lei Mubai grabbed his halberd with both hands, slashing out!

Monstrous and dreadful waves of blood surged into the sky. At that moment, even the void itself seemed to tear apart. With this strike of Lei Mubai, an indomitable momentum was brought forth. It was an unstoppable, apocalyptic momentum that seemed as if it could destroy the very world! Even those people outside the protective light curtain felt their entire bodies’ blood essence swelling forth, their blood tumbling; this was an unbearable feeling!

Too strong!

Just the shockwave of this attack was enough to have many

disciples with low cultivation to vomit blood from the sick feeling in their bodies. How could Lin Ming possibly stop this attack?

Everyone's hearts seemed to stop beating. Mu Qianyu wringed her hands together, her heart tightly clenching.

On the stage, facing this crazy storm of blood, Lin Ming's clothes fluttered in the wind, his long hair blown around by the chaotic storm.

At this time, his expression was calm like a placid lake. He linked his sense to the Heretical God Seed. Above the Purple Comet Spear, a purple arc of thunder and a tiny flame began to tremble!

10,000 year old Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo!

10,000 year old Sacred Flame Parasol Tree!

With the increased power from these top quality materials, flames twisted, thunder howled! The savage and manic power of thunder and fire burst forth, like the dam holding back a raging river had been shattered!

The spearpoint was straight, endlessly driving forwards!

The power of thunder and fire gave off terrifying explosive sounds that reverberated in the air. The Purple Comet Spear was like a meteor wound with thunder and fire, piercing forwards!

In that instant, the Earthcore Crimson Flame and the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder connected...

Thunderfire Annihilation!

Bang!

An extremely horrific energy detonated. In that moment, it was like all sound had been swallowed, and the sun itself had lost its color. Time seemed to suddenly slow down!

Lin Ming's vision was completely flooded with a blinding light, it was like he had been instantly sent into a separate dimension. He could clearly hear the sound of his heart beating, and even the billowing heat and excited cries within the Heretical God Seed.

Kacha!

The protective barrier array enchantment that had been reinforced was able to resist the all-out attack of an early Xiantian master. Now, this protective enchantment shattered once again. The true essence shockwaves that originated from the explosion were too terrifying. Even the master who had laid down this protective enchantment would never have thought that the battle between a late Pulse Condensation martial artist and an early Houtian realm martial artist could reach such a level!

The blazing white light lasted for several breaths of time. All of

the tables at the banquet celebration had been completely overturned. Fortunately, the masters present had already foreseen that something dangerous was about to happen, and they created shields just in time to protect everyone from injury.

The martial arts stage had already been blown to ruins. Lin Ming propped himself up with the Purple Comet Spear, finding it difficult to stand.

But, at this time, Lei Mubai's entire body was dyed red with blood, and even his eyes had glazed over.

Plop!

Lei Mubai fell to his knees, his body shaking.

Seeing this scene, everyone was petrified. They needed time to digest just what had happened.

Lin Ming... he won!?!?

Chapter 386 – Action First, Consequences Later

The Thundercrest Sovereign Sect Lei Jingtian was shaking in disbelief. No one understood more than him just how terrifying Lei Mubai's strength was. But now, this Lin Ming had actually jumped realms and defeated him! The mental impact that this brought was too great, he simply couldn't believe it!

As for the young disciples of the Five Element Region, all of them were still in a daze. Whether it was Lei Mubai or Lin Ming, the power of these two had already surpassed the scope of their understanding. And now, Lin Ming's victory made them feel like they were living a lucid dream.

This was the first time they ever realized that a late Pulse Condensation martial artist and an early Houtian martial artist could achieve such a degree of power.

This shock was too intense, none of them were able to open their mouths to speak. Even a Saint rank talent wasn't insufficient to describe Lin Ming. In their view, he was like a character that had only existed in ancient legends. For instance, the Netherworld Great Emperor, who had once taken the heads of all the sect leaders of the Five Element Region...

Within the Sunfire Sect banquet area, the Sunfire Princess stared at Lin Ming, her heart pounding and her face flushed red, sighing. She had been feeling a bit resentful because the spotlight had been stolen from her, but after bearing witness to the glorious battle between Lin Ming and Lei Mubai, she instead felt that she was very

lucky. With her strength, if she went onstage it would be nothing more than a good laugh.

“How deplorable. I once thought that I was a top talent, but now, it seems I was just a frog in a well.”

It wasn't just the Sunfire Princess, but even the proud Zhou Lie, the clear Zhan Yunjian, and the indifferent Bai Aoxuan, all of them had the same idea. Ever since they were children, they had grown up under the aura of being top geniuses, and they had no peers that were able to compete on their level. This inevitably gave birth to thoughts that they would become the future heroes of the world. But now, if they compared themselves with Lin Ming, they feared that they would never catch up to him in their lifetimes.

Mu Fengxian withdrew her gaze, her eyes slowly closing. Lin Ming was a genius that had exceeded the ability of Divine Phoenix Island to raise. Such an existence should have appeared in a fifth-grade sect, or even a Holy Land.

Only a great power that had thousands or even tens of thousands of years of accumulated destiny would be able to raise a genius like Lin Ming so that he could one day become a Peerless Emperor. He would one day ascend to the skies, eventually leaving behind an indelible legacy in his people, being known as an unrivalled Peerless Great Emperor.

Within the entire square, no one spoke for several breaths of time; the audience was starkly silent. The Revolving Core Elders were sighing in their hearts, and the young heroic elites were etching the details of this battle between young Kings in their

mind. This battle had simply left too great an impression on their minds, and had completely subverted the way in which they view the world. Before, many of them had dreams of being a chosen of heaven that would ascend to the heavens, but now, it was as if they had been rudely awakened from this dream. Perhaps, to them, this wasn't a bad thing at all.

In the silence of the square, as the audience was still disoriented, Lin Ming recovered the Purple Comet Spear and moved towards Lei Mubai, one step at a time.

At this time, Lei Mubai was kneeling on the floor, the light in his eyes dim and his mouth wet with blood. He still remained conscious, but because his injuries were too heavy and he had consumed too much blood essence, he was on the verge of teetering over on the floor.

Seeing Lin Ming walk towards him, Lei Mubai's once dim eyes turned a bright blood red. His murderous intent and will to kill burst forth. He wanted to open his mouth to spit out several words, but as he tried to speak, all that came flowing out was blood, and he simply couldn't say a word.

Today's shame had forever etched itself into Lei Mubai's heart. If he didn't avenge this disgrace, this would become a barrier in Lei Mubai that would frustrate his spirit and stymie his every effort.

Those that cultivated in the demonic path were much more focused on making sure that their thoughts flowed freely and their spirit was unburdened. The demonic path had always been synonymous with doing whatever one wished, unlike the righteous

path where there were still many morals and principles one had to follow.

Those that cultivated the demonic path took the world as their enemy and went against all living beings. If they didn't act in a manner that satisfied their own desires, then what was the point of cultivating the demonic path? They may as well pray to Buddha!

Lei Mubai couldn't speak, thus he only cursed in his heart. 'On the day that Divine Phoenix Island is exterminated, I will have you beg for death. I will waste your martial arts, break your four limbs and stick you in a box. I will have you watch as I freely use all of the resources that Divine Phoenix Island has accumulated. I will also waste Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun's martial arts, and strip their clothes naked in front of you. I will ravage them, humiliate them, and obtain their bloodlines!'

As Lei Mubai thought this, his lips curved up in a smile. The destruction of Divine Phoenix Island would happen sooner or later, that day was not too far away.

As he saw Lin Ming's eyes contain a murderous intent that wished to kill him, he sneered. 'Pitiful. No matter how talented you are, you're still trapped in the fourth-grade sect that is Divine Phoenix Island. This is no different than placing shackles on your feet. You will never ascend to the heavens!'

"Lin... Ming... one day... I will avenge today's shame!" Lei Mubai said with a true essence sound transmission. With his current condition, even using a true essence sound transmission was very difficult.

Lin Ming acted as if he didn't even hear Lei Mubai's true essence sound transmission. Instead, he brightly smiled as he sauntered over and placed his hand on Lei Mubai's shoulder, a friendly gesture as if he wanted to help lift him up.

Lei Mubai's entire body stiffened, "You..."

"Before, I had said that you didn't understand the situation you were in. And even now, you still don't understand just what situation you're in. Avenge the shame of today? I'm sorry, but it seems that you'll never have the opportunity to do so." Lin Ming's lips moved, his bone chilling true essence sound transmission sounding in Lei Mubai's ears, making him feel like he had fallen into an icy sea.

"You're... crazy...!"

"Now die!"

Lin Ming's smiling face suddenly turned cold. He lifted his palm and smashed it down on Lei Mubai's chest.

Pulse Cutting Palm!

Peng!

Lei Mubai's body shook. He was already weakened to the point

that he could no longer resist. Lin Ming's brutal power broke into his meridians, shredding them all to pieces!

Puff!

Lei Mubai crazily spat out blood, his mind filled with incredible disbelief. This Lin Ming, he was utterly mad!

This incident had happened so suddenly that when Lin Ming had struck Lei Mubai with his palm, none of the Revolving Core masters were able to stop him. Everyone thought that Lin Ming was about to support Lei Mubai up by his arm, but none of them thought that Lin Ming would take advantage of this time when Lei Mubai had lost all strength to resistance to lay down such a heavy strike. What was he doing? Was he trying to provoke a war between Divine Phoenix Island and the Five Element Region?

Divine Phoenix Island was already in a very precarious situation. If they provoked such outrage and stirred up a war with the Five Element Region, they would absolutely die!

Lin Ming's actions were only digging his own grave! Even if he was a character that was destined to become a Peerless Emperor in the future, at this moment, Divine Phoenix Island would not dare to protect him!

“Boy, you are seeking death!”

No one was more enraged than Lei Jingtian. Lei Mubai was the

Saint Son of the South Sea Demon Region! He was the future leader of the South Sea Demon Region!

If he died here, the South Sea Demon Region would vent their rage upon him. Even if the South Sea Demon Region didn't bother with him now because of their war with Divine Phoenix Island, they would not pardon him in the future. As for his dreams of the ancient Devil Tome, that had all fallen apart!

Lei Jingtian had never felt so angry before. His hands flashed with a purple electric light and his palm slammed down towards Lin Ming. This palm strike was able to instantly kill a late Xiantian realm master; Lin Ming would absolutely die.

Everyone was too surprised to even call out. Lei Jingtian's palm was already coming down. Under the violent compression of energy, the space around Lin Ming tightened as if it were rooting him in place, not allowing him to move. But the truth was, even if Lin Ming could freely move, he still wouldn't be able to dodge.

“Lei Jingtian, what are you doing!?”

At this critical moment, Mu Yuhuang appeared like a blaze of flame on the stage, her palm coming up to meet Lei Jingtian. A loud thunderclap roared through the square!

Bang!

Lei Jingtian was forced back several steps. As for Mu Yuhuang,

she shook for a moment before firmly steadying herself.

Lei Jingtian's was shaking with fury. "What am I doing!? I should ask you what you are doing! Mu Yuhuang, are you planning on allowing your disciple to recklessly murder others!?"

At this moment, Mu Yuhuang had a very ugly complexion. In the moment that Lin Ming had taken action, she had heard a true essence sound transmission from him, "Lei Mubai is a spy from the South Sea Demon Region!"

Lin Ming had completely taken action first and worried about consequences later. Mu Yuhuang hadn't even had the time to respond!

Even the strong-willed Mu Yuhuang was in a complete mess. The consequences of this incident were simply too great; six of the seven great sects of the Five Element Region were present today and closely watching. This boy Lin Ming, how was he planning on revealing everything!?

If he didn't have proof to back up his thoughts, even Divine Phoenix Island wouldn't be able to maintain his life!

She wanted to rebuke Lin Ming, but now was not the time to reprimand him. Since what had happened had happened, first, she had to resolve this issue.

The Elders of the Five Element Region's sects had also stood up,

anger on their faces as they glared at Lin Ming. No matter what, the Five Element Region's seven great sects of metal, wood, water, fire, earth, wind, and thunder were all connected to each other; how could they tolerate something like this occurring?

At this point, Lei Mubai already seemed to be dying, the faint embers of his life flickering away. All of his meridians had been shattered, but he still clung to his single breath and didn't faint. He wasn't even able to make an expression of anger on his face. He could only relentlessly stare at Lin Ming, unadulterated hatred in his eyes; it was absolutely alarming!

Lei Mubai hadn't yet realized just what Lin Ming had done to him. He only felt that the meridians in his body had broken in many places. Although it was difficult to treat damage to the meridians, a fifth-grade sect still had the means to do so. It would only require him to stay in bed for several months.

Of course, this was only Lei Mubai's one-sided wishful thinking.

Lin Ming completely ignored the hate within Lei Mubai's eyes and faced the anger from the Elders of the Five Element Region's six sects. He confidently cupped his hands across his chest in a polite ritual and said, "Thunder Sovereign said that I killed him. But that is wrong. Even though my method was extreme, Lei Mubai is still alive."

Lei Jingtian didn't think that these would be the first to come out of Lin Ming's mouth. He began to tremble with anger. "You shattered all his meridians and yet you speak such sarcastic words! Today, this old man will beat this little bastard to death!"

Lei Jingtian's momentum exploded. But with Mu Yuhuang in front of him, there was nothing he could do.

Lin Ming said, "All of the actions I've taken naturally have a reason, and that is that Lei Mubai is from the South Sea Demon Region. Don't tell me that the Thunder Sovereign doesn't know this fact!"

"What!?"

With Lin Ming's words, the entire audience was startled, their minds shaking. Even Lei Jingtian was filled with disbelief. How was this possible? How had he discovered this!?

However, he had lived for several hundred years and managed not to lose his composure. He immediately denied this. "What irresponsible fiction! Mubai is the genius that I personally discovered within the northern domains three years ago! His background is clean; how could he possibly be a spy!?"

Although Lei Jingtian was very skilled at covering his expression, there was still a slight true essence fluctuation that he emitted from the shock of a moment ago. All of this was keenly captured by Mu Yuhuang's senses.

Chapter 387 – Confrontation

Although Lei Jingtian was very skilled at covering his expression, there was still a slight true essence fluctuation that he emitted from the shock of a moment ago. All of this was keenly captured by Mu Yuhuang's senses.

‘This old fox!’ Mu Yuhuang's face darkened. She finally understood why Lei Jingtian had been so adamantly opposing her, obstructing her repeatedly. It was highly likely that he was collaborating together with Lei Mubai. ‘Lei Jingtian most likely sold himself out to the South Sea Demon Region. There's a high chance that what Lin Ming said was true. Action first, consequences later, what a brave boy! The key is, how can he prove this? In this situation it's impossible to torture the information out of this Lei Mubai.’

Mu Yuhuang knew what was at stake. If Lin Ming couldn't provide a clear and adequate explanation, he would most likely die a horrible death. It was impossible for Divine Phoenix Island to protect him in that case.

Lei Jingtian's entire body flashed with arcs of thunder. His eyes were like those of a savage beast staring at its prey.

Even the Deep Earth Sect's Shi Zhongkun was standing behind him. Before, he had been humiliated and defeated by Lin Ming in a battle of words. Now that he had an opportunity to kick Lin Ming while he was down, how could he possibly miss it?

“You are making false allegations boy! Good! What vicious thoughts you have! Because of some dispute, you even shattered all the meridians of Nephew Lei Mubai. If you do not give an explanation for this, then I will break all of your meridians. Otherwise, how much face will my Five Element Region still have!?”

As Shi Zhongkun spoke, the aura of his body erupted. With the combination of two middle Revolving Core masters suppressing Lin Ming together, even though Mu Yuhuang stood in front of him, he still felt the pressure on him surging.

Lin Ming didn't have a single good impression towards this Shi Zhongkun. His voice was low as he said, “Elder Shi, it's irresponsible to speak nonsense.”

Shi Zhongkun sneered. “As if you know not to blabber nonsense. You say that Nephew Lei Mubai is a spy from the South Sea Demon Region? Then what evidence do you have? If you cannot produce evidence, then prepare to pay with your life!”

As Shi Zhongkun spoke, the Five Element Region disciples were stirred into a frenzy. Especially those that had been so miserably oppressed by Lin Ming, such as Chu Yunfei, Chen Kun, and Shi Hanshan. All of them were clamoring to have Lin Ming pay with his life.

“Lin Ming, this isn't a trivial matter. If you have evidence, then quickly produce it. Otherwise, I cannot protect you.” Mu Yuhuang said with a true essence sound transmission. There was a faint hint of criticism in her heart. This was such a great matter but he

hadn't even spoken to her before acting.

Lin Ming took a deep breath then replied, "Senior Mu, I didn't have a choice; I just didn't have conclusive evidence at the time to confirm my suspicions. If I had told you in advance, the Council of Elders might even need to be convened. If that happened, I fear that someone might be informed in advance, and the result would be Lei Mubai escaping somehow. Thus I had no choice but to act first and explain later."

Lin Ming was aware that even though Mu Yuhuang trusted him, she wouldn't act with just his side of the story. She would absolutely bring this matter up with the Council of Elders, and then the matter would be dropped. After all, this spy was just a junior. Even if he was killed it wouldn't have a big impact on anything. But if they were wrong, then that would be a catastrophe.

When that happened, Lin Ming would only be able to helplessly watch Lei Mubai leave Divine Phoenix Island and return to his South Sea Demon Region. He would become a serpent that lay in wait to bite him.

Lin Ming had family, he didn't want someone like that aiming for him. One Ouyang Boyan was already enough for him. Ouyang Boyan was from the Seven Profound Valleys so he wouldn't dare to act too recklessly, but as for Lei Mubai, he wasn't restricted by these scruples. Therefore he had no choice but to cripple Lei Mubai to cut off any path of retreat for him.

Mu Yuhuang's complexion completely changed. "What did you

say? You don't have conclusive evidence? This was only a guess!?"

Lin Ming said, "No, I still have assurance that I'm right..."

As Lin Ming spoke, he stepped forwards and stood in front of Shi Zhongkun and Lei Jingtian, directly facing the pressure of these two Great Elders.

Shi Zhongkun's expression was a taunting sneer, as if he had already seen the future where Lin Ming's meridians would all be broken.

As for Lei Jingtian, he looked very savage. He felt his heart speeding up a bit, but he still didn't believe that Lin Ming had evidence. As long as Lin Ming couldn't put forth any evidence, he could insist that any accusations Lin Ming made were nothing but baseless lies and slander.

Lin Ming cupped his hands across his chest in a polite gesture and calmly said, "Thunder Sovereign, please be patient. If you are able to confirm that I am lying, then you may kill me or torture me or do anything else you want."

Lei Jingtian frowned, his eyes flashing with murderous intent. "This is what you said! If you do not have evidence, this old man will beat you to death!"

As Lei Jingtian spoke, his eyes were actually on Mu Yuhuang. He said to her, "High Master Yuhuang, this is what your disciple

personally said. Do you have anything to say!?”

Mu Yuhuang's complexion became increasingly ugly. At this moment, no matter how strong she was, it would be impossible to justify any reason to protect Lin Ming.

My Yuhuang's voice sunk by several points, her voice reaching arctic temperatures, “Since Lin Ming made this promise himself, naturally I will not interfere. If Lin Ming is truly making false allegations, then Thunder Sovereign may handle this matter however he wishes. But if Lin Ming is able to produce evidence, and there are also those who would deny it, then this old woman will personally act and kill everyone who does!”

As Lei Jingtian heard these words that were filled with murderous intent, his heart stilled for a moment. But he still sneered and said, “High Master should remember the words that she has said!”

Since the matter had reached this stage, Mu Qianyu could no longer sit still. She nervously looked at Lin Ming, her heart in tumult.

The entire audience's eyes were locked onto Lin Ming. Lin Ming took a deep breath, and then asked in a completely calm voice, “There are several questions I would like to ask Thunder Sovereign...”

“Go ahead! I want to know just what you ask!” Lei Jingtian responded in a contentious tone.

Lin Ming said, “First question, when Lei Mubai fought me, was the cultivation method he used from the Thundercrest Sect?”

Lei Jingtian frowned, “No! The cultivation method that Lei Mubai used was one that he found in some ancient runes. Since ancient times, true geniuses have always had a great destiny fall unto them. Obtaining a lucky opportunity from some ancient ruins is a completely normal matter!”

“Then it is as the Thunder Sovereign said.” Lin Ming nodded. “Second question. Is Lei Mubai’s Thunder Soul handed down from the Thundercrest Sect?”

Lei Jingtian’s voice spoke. This boy, was he trying to set up verbal traps for him to jump into?

After thinking about it and not finding out where any of these traps might be, Lei Jingtian said, “No, Mubai found his Thunder Soul after adventuring into an extremely dangerous and ominous land. It is not from my Thundercrest Sect.”

Lei Jingtian had made up his mind that he would distance himself from everything as much as he could, in order to prevent Lin Ming forcing him to give unclear explanations in the future, forcing him to lie more.

Lin Ming nodded. “Third question. Who are Lei Mubai’s parents? And did Lei Mubai ever mention his own background to Thunder Sovereign before?”

Lei Jingtian said, “Mubai was orphaned as a child. His parents were mortals, and they died in the chaos of war!”

Mortal parents, and they also died. Lei Jingtian believed that no matter how great Lin Ming’s ability was, he didn’t have the means to prove otherwise.

Lin Ming said, “My questioning is over. Senior Mu, may I request that you lay down an enchantment that can inhibit true essence sound transmissions?”

Mu Yuhuang’s eyes shot up. She didn’t know what Lin Ming was planning, but she still looked for a Divine Phoenix Island array master and had an enchantment laid down to his specifications that could inhibit true essence sound transmissions.

After Lin Ming confirmed that the enchantment had been laid down, he swiped his spatial ring and took out a red crystal that was the size of a drop of water. “Do you know what this is?”

“Mm?”

Lei Jingtian’s eyes narrowed. From this small little thing, he could feel an ancient and endless energy emitting. Obviously, it was some sort of extraordinary object.

Just what was this?

Lei Jingtian didn't know, but Shi Zhongkun's expression changed. He had seen something similar recorded down in the ancient texts before. This boy actually had such a treasure!

Mu Fengxian stood up, her eyes bright. She looked at Lin Ming with a profound expression before saying, "After the fall of the Netherworld Great Emperor, the Devil Demon Heart he cultivated was crushed into three fragments. Rumors said that each of these three fragments were obtained by separate Revolving Core powerhouses, and used to produced many Shattered Demon Heart Crystals. After one dissolves and absorbs this blood essence, it is able to increase a Xiantian master's chances of reaching the Revolving Core realm. This old woman has seen one before. If I'm not wrong, then this red crystal that Lin Ming has is a Shattered Demon Heart Crystal.

The Netherworld Great Emperor had fallen over 1000 years ago. The Revolving Core old monsters present were only a few hundred years old, and there were very few people that knew just what a Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was. Most people had only seen such an object recorded in the ancient texts. As for someone who had seen one with their own eyes, that would only be Mu Fengxian. At the time, she had already broken through to the Revolving Core realm, and the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was no longer very useful to her.

Lei Jingtian's eyebrow arched up. 'A treasure that could increase the chances for a Xiantian master to break through to the Revolving Core realm? This boy actually had such a precious object?'

Lin Ming said, “That is exactly what this is.”

Lin Ming had obtained a total of ten Shattered Demon Heart Crystals from Zhou Xinyu. When he was being pursued by Huang Zixuan, he had been forced to take half of one. Now, he had a total of nine and a half crystals left over.

Half of a Shattered Demon Heart Crystal was able to help Lin Ming’s full body Tempering Marrow reach 5%. After that, he had gone into seclusion on Dark Moon Island for three months. Lin Ming had swallowed many Heaven Opening Pills that had been massively enhanced by medicinal inscription symbols, and had managed to raise his Tempering Marrow to 20%. As for the Shattered Demon Heart Crystals, Lin Ming worried that he had too many pill toxins within his body, so he hadn’t taken any more. Now within his spatial ring, were a total of nine and a half Shattered Demon Heart Crystals.

Now that he had to take one out, even Lin Ming felt his heart ache.

“Boy, what are you planning on doing?” Lei Jingtian felt a faintly foreboding feeling in his heart.

Lin Ming sad, “Thunder Sovereign may not know, but the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal contains the remnant will of the Netherworld Great Emperor. After swallowing it, one can sense the energy of the Netherworld Great Emperor... when the time comes, you will naturally know what I mean.”

As Lin Ming spoke, he glanced over at the crowd and said, “I would like to request several seniors to come onstage and confirm a matter!”

Lei Jingtian’s expression changed. This contained the will of the Netherworld Great Emperor? What did that mean? If he swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, would he be able to sense something?

He inadvertently glanced at Lei Mubai. He saw that at this time, Lei Mubai was lying on the ground, his face ashen, his lips pale, and his eyes glazed, as if the embers of his life were burning to an end. Lei Jingtian’s heart sank; Lei Mubai was finished!

“Elder Jin, may I ask that you step up? And also Elder Bai.” Lin Ming separately asked the Golden Bell Mountain Elder and the Arctic Ice Palace Elder. In his opinion, these two forces would be relatively fair. Golden Bell Mountain had always been very low-key. As for Arctic Ice Palace, they were rather cold and proud individuals – they shouldn’t have any reason to cover for Lei Mubai. In fact, besides Lei Jingtian, there shouldn’t be anyone there that would risk the wrath of the world and sell themselves out to the South Sea Demon Region.

Lei Jingtian’s heart went completely cold. He now knew why Lin Ming had asked for an enchantment to be laid down that inhibited true essence sound transmissions. And that was to prevent him from discussing anything with these two Great Elders!

What about those earlier three questions? Why did he ask them? Lei Jingtian was confused, brooding over this. The foreboding

feeling in his heart was becoming increasingly intense. He thought that if something happened, he would find a way to leave by himself. As for Lei Mubai, he could die here alone.

Chapter 388 – Alliance

Lin Ming coolly divided the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal into thirds, and then gave one third to the Golden Bell Mountain Elder and another to the Arctic Ice Palace Elder. These two were still confused about what was happening, so Elder Jin asked, “Lin Ming, what’s the meaning of this?”

Lin Ming faintly smile and said, “Once you swallow this Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, you will be able to feel the energy of the Netherworld Great Emperor. When that happens, you two will discover that this energy is the same as Lei Mubai’s!”

“Mm!?” Elder Jin’s expression chanced. If Lin Ming was willing to use his life as the stake in this matter, he was most likely confident in this!

Elder Jin gave Lei Jingtian a deep look. After he saw the ugly expression of Lei Jingtian, he already had certain conclusions made up within his mind.

Lin Ming bowed and said, “Since this matter is related to my life, I would like to kindly request that two seniors take a pledge to their heart of martial arts that their words will ring true.”

Taking a pledge on one’s heart of martial wasn’t truly effective for any situation. When it came to matters that were extremely important to oneself, one could still break it. But in this situation, the two Elders naturally wouldn’t renege on their word.

“That’s understandable here. Then, this old man will swear on his heart of martial arts that every word I say will be true.” Elder Jin frankly said.

After Elder Jin made his pledge, the female Elder from Arctic Ice Palace followed him.

The two of them fused their blood with the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal and prepared to swallow it. The Shattered Demon Heart Crystal only had a very small effect on a Revolving Core elder. But, it would still be able to slightly increase their cultivation.

After the two of them swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal thirds, they sat in meditation and steadily breathed. The two of them had a cultivation at the middle Revolving Core realm. Naturally, once the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal’s energy was released into their bodies, it wouldn’t be dangerous at all.

The two Elders had agitated expressions. They too had seen the same scene as Lin Ming. They saw the Netherworld Great Emperor as he fought against countless demons. This sort of boundless and unreachable magnificence and momentum that resounded through the universe really made one’s mind tremble in awe.

A moment later, Elder Jin let out a long breath; he was the first to open his eyes.

Mu Yuhuang’s eyebrows rose. Mu Qianyu’s heartbeat also quickened. At this moment, everyone’s eyes were focused on Elder

Jin.

Lin Ming was silent. He only quietly watched Elder Jin, waiting for his final judgement.

Elder Jing meaningfully looked at Lin Ming. He didn't directly respond, instead asking, "Lin Ming, have you swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal? Otherwise, there is no way you would have known this so clearly."

Lin Ming nodded, acknowledging this.

"Haha! You are truly a thousand year talent of the South Horizon Region. You only have a cultivation at the mere Pulse Condensation period, yet you can swallow the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. This old man is too surprised!"

Elder Jin heavily sighed, and then spoke in a clarion tone that resounded through the square, "What Lin Ming said is true. This old man truly felt the energy of the Netherworld Great Emperor come from Lei Mubai's body. This kind of energy can only originate from a bloodline legacy. If this old man guesses correctly, then this so-called Lei Mubai is most likely a direct descendant of the Netherworld Great Emperor!"

As Elder Jin spoke, the entire audience was petrified. Lei Jingtian's face was already colored like liver. As for Shi Zhongkun, he also had a very ugly expression. He had come up to antagonize Lin Ming, but he was once again humiliated by him.

Arctic Ice Palace's Elder Bai also opened her eyes at this moment, slowly nodding, fully agreeing with Elder Jin's words.

Mu Yuhuang was finally able to relax, her heart calming down. She looked at Lei Jingtian and coldly asked, "Lei Jingtian, do you have anything to say about this? Lin Ming just asked you a question a moment ago, and you said that his parents had been mortals."

"But according to this old woman, the Netherworld Great Emperor's descendants had all ran away to the South Sea Demon Region, now becoming the core of that evil sect. This old woman had never once heard that there were any mortals that had this bloodline, and had also died in the chaos of mortal wars!"

Lei Jingtian was forced speechless by Mu Yuhuang's words, he simply had no way to respond to this. He finally clenched his teeth and said, "Everything that I knew about Mubai's background was told to me by him, how was I supposed to know what is true or false? Moreover, even though Elder Jin was likely correct in his assumption, that doesn't mean that it is absolutely true."

Elder Jin glanced at Lei Jingtian with contempt. At this time, he was still speaking his useless sophistry and attempting to leave a way to back out by saying that he may have been wrong.

Compared to Lin Ming's fuzzy judgement, Elder Jin was much more clear in his assessment. Lin Ming had swallowed the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal a long time ago. As for Elder Jin, he was able to contrast the energy within the Shattered Demon Hearty Crystal with Lei Mubai in front of him. Naturally, his

assurance of the facts was much greater.

Seeing Lei Jingtian quibble over such minor issues, Lin Ming grinned and said, “Thunder Sovereign, I just happen to know some methods of torture that are good at extracting information. If Thunder Sovereign isn’t opposed, I can attempt to try these methods on Lei Mubai, and perhaps we may be able to obtain some ‘unexpected’ information.

As Lin Ming bit out the word ‘unexpected’, Lei Jingtian suddenly felt a cold chill run down his spine. This boy, he was actually threatening him!

As Lei Jingtian looked at this dead-eyed Lei Mubai who was lying on the ground like a dead dog, he felt fear grip him. He wasn’t able to guarantee that this fellow wouldn’t randomly bite him in his desperate state.

The South Sea Demon Region had a very vile reputation. If Lei Jingtian was known to have formed an alliance with the South Sea Demon Region for his own personal gain, then everything he had ever done would be vilified. He would lose any face he had, and he would be held in contempt by everyone.

Lei Jingtian’s face changed colors, alternating between red and blue. As he stood on the stage, there wasn’t a single word he could say!

Lin Ming whispered some words into Mu Yuhuang’s ear, and Mu Yuhuang suddenly smiled. She waved her hand to release the true

essence sound transmission inhibiting enchantment, allowing Lei Jingtian to speak.

“Boy, what do you want to do?” Lei Jingtian asked with a true essence sound transmission. At this time, Lei Jingtian was fuming with outrage. He was a proud and dignified Sovereign of a fourth-grade sect, and yet he was actually pushed to this point by Lin Ming. He even had to humbly talk conditions with Lin Ming; how could he not be angry?

“Thunder Sovereign, perhaps you can speak with Senior Mu about creating the alliance again. How about it?”

Although Lin Ming hoped that he would be able to cripple Lei Jingtian, this was only a fanciful thought. Even it was proven beyond a doubt that Lei Jingtian had secretly made deals with the South Sea Demon Region, he wouldn't be able to do anything to him. At most, he could only ruin his reputation forever.

After all, Lei Jingtian was the Thundercrest Sovereign, and also an almighty Revolving Core Supreme Elder. What could Divine Phoenix Island do against him? If they killed him here, that would rouse retaliation from the Thundercrest Sect.

“Are you threatening this old man!?”

“Threatening you?” Lin Ming smiled. “Does the Thunder Sovereign still believe that your deal with the South Sea Demon Region can continue in these circumstances?”

Lei Jingtian grit his teeth.

As for Mu Yuhuang, she was smiling. She had never expected that this banquet competition would have such a dramatic result. Lei Jingtian had fallen into his own trap. Just thinking about made her feel extremely satisfied.

Mu Yuhuang intentionally spoke in the presence of everyone, “It seems as if Thunder Sovereign has been deceived by Lei Mubai. If I were the Thunder Sovereign, I would immediately kill Lei Mubai here and clean the sect of this trash.”

Mu Yuhuang’s words had instantly placed Lei Jingtian into a dilemma. If he killed Lei Mubai, that would directly make him an enemy of the South Sea Demon Region. If he didn’t kill Lei Mubai, everyone would suspect that he had an unclear and dangerous relationship with him.

Lei Jingtian clenched his teeth, and sent a true essence sound transmission to Lin Ming and Mu Yuhuang, “Don’t push things too far! Early tomorrow morning I will speak to the Five Element Region’s Elders again about forming the alliance! Now, give me Lei Mubai!”

Now that matters had devolved to this point, Lei Jingtian only wanted to obtain the ancient Devil Tome in Lei Mubai’s spatial ring. Although it was only the first volume and the rest would be impossible to obtain, it was still better than nothing.

Lin Ming said, “Lei Mubai can be handed to Thunder Sovereign,

but he cannot be brought down the mountain. As for Lei Mubai's Thunder Soul and spatial ring, these will be left behind."

Lei Jingtian frowned, "You still want to loot in this chaos? Most of what is in Lei Mubai's spatial ring belongs to my Thundercrest Sect! Why should I give anything to you!?"

Lin Ming smiled. "Thunder Sovereign is really forgetful. Before, didn't Thunder Sovereign say that Lei Mubai's Thunder Soul and cultivation method were found in some ancient ruins somewhere? Thunder Sovereign also added that since ancient times, geniuses had always had great destinies fall on their bodies. Since what Lei Mubai has doesn't belong to the Thundercrest Sect, and Lei Mubai is also a spy who was captured by me, then according to this, it stands to reason that everything he has should belong to me. What does Thunder Sovereign think of this?"

As Lin Ming leisurely spoke, his words almost caused Lei Jingtian to vomit blood on the spot.

Lei Jingtian felt that today he had been made into a complete fool, being led in circles all day. He pointed at Lin Ming, his fingers shaking, but ultimately didn't say anything. Finally, he grit his teeth and turned around to leave. As the Thundercrest Sect disciples saw Lei Jingtian's anger that was like a billowing inferno, none of them said anything, only quickly following behind him.

Only Zhou Xiaoling was left, slumped over on her chair. She watched Lei Mubai, who was lying prone on the ground like a dead dog, and her eyes glazed over.

Lei Mubai was defeated by Lin Ming... Lei Mubai was a spy... Lei Mubai's meridians had all been wasted by Lin Ming...

As her mind echoed with these thoughts, she felt as if she was going crazy.

Zhou Lie glanced at his little sister and deeply sighed, not saying anything. He knew that at this moment, no matter what he said, she wouldn't listen to him.

On the stage, the only Elder left was Shi Zhongkun. His expression wasn't much better than Lei Jingtian's. He also felt like he had been made into a clown. He had stupidly jumped onto the stage to get some revenge, but not only did he fail, he also attracted scorn and ridicule.

"Elder Shi, is something wrong?" Lin Ming asked with a smile.

Shi Zhongkun coldly humphed, "Truly, heroes come from the young. Young Hero Lin, this old man admires you very much!" After Elder Shi said this, he quickly walked offstage. As for the Deep Earth Sect disciples, they began to file out of the square. At this time, there were only disciples of the four other sects left over. Because of the fight between Lin Ming and Lei Mubai, all of the tables had been overturned and the dishes had all been shattered. Naturally, there was no way to continue the banquet celebrations.

The other four great sects bid their farewells and also left.

Mu Yuhuang was in an extremely good mood. Even if tomorrow's alliance didn't work out, the fact that she could ruin Lei Jingtian's face today also made her feel fabulous.

Not only that, now that she had his weakness, it was highly likely that Lei Jingtian would yield tomorrow. The reason that the last meeting with the six great sects from the Five Element Region hadn't worked out was because Lei Jingtian had bit down and wouldn't let go, not allowing concessions anywhere. Since the other sects didn't want to lose out, the whole negotiation had broken down.

But as long as Lei Jingtian would seal his loud mouth, the negotiations could smoothly proceed.

Mu Yuhuang looked at Lin Ming, revealing a grateful and happy smile. Lin Ming was truly Divine Phoenix Island's lucky star. At today's banquet celebrations, Lin Ming had single-handedly earned the greatest merit!

Lin Ming had not only displayed a magnificent performance as he defeated all the heroic elites that challenged him, allowing Divine Phoenix Island to gain face, but he had also made Lei Jingtian eat his own sh*t, making it so that he had no choice but to renegotiate with Divine Phoenix Island. This reversal of fortune that was impossible for Mu Yuhuang to accomplish had actually been accomplished by Lin Ming.

Chapter 389 – Celebration Party

That night, the usually silent Parasol Tree Pavilion was seething with a festive atmosphere, the entire island overflowing with excitement. Within the glades of the Parasol Tree Pavilion, massive bonfires were held in celebration, with giant parties roaring in full swing.

At Divine Phoenix Island, disciples would rarely eat something like barbecue. Usually, what they ate originated from the spirit valleys. There were spirit grains, spirit vegetables, tender bamboo, and other such delicate and soft foods. There were even many female disciples that hadn't touched meat for years. This was truly a land that was untouched by the tainting smoke and fire of the mortal world.

Divine Phoenix Island was a very serious and no-nonsense land, and the amount of rules one had to adhere to was breathtaking. The chance for one to indulge themselves in a massive bonfire party like tonight rarely happened even once in several years. Without explicit approval, if one attempted something like this, they would be punished and forced to reflect on their faults.

The young core disciples of Divine Phoenix Island – no matter how high and lofty their status – were still youths, and thus still had the mindset and disposition of youths. At night, they would usually seclude themselves in their rooms, cultivating, cultivating, cultivating, and then cultivating some more. This sort of monotonous activity would continue for months on end. After a long time, the suppressed unrest in their hearts made them feel anxious. Thus, with tonight's chance of being able to participate in such a rare bonfire celebration, none of the core disciples or direct

disciples dared to miss this chance. The inner court disciples could only mix in by finding an entrance through their connections, vowing to enjoy the absolute revelry that was occurring tonight.

Within Divine Phoenix Island, 80 to 90% of the disciples were women. Not only that, but most of them were the beautiful and exquisite of women. At a glance, a group of these women chattering together was truly a beautiful sight to behold.

Among these individuals was actually the Moon Seizing Sect's Zhou Xinyu. As a new disciple, she didn't have the qualifications to enter a core disciple bonfire celebration like this, but Zhang Zhen remembered that this girl had arrived at Divine Phoenix Island together with Lin Ming, and it was also Zhang Zhen who had received them. Zhang Zhen guessed that Zhou Xinyu might be Lin Ming's maid or even something like a concubine, and that was why he had deliberately brought her here. In Zhang Zhen's opinion, with Zhou Xinyu's talent, she would also be placed as a maid within Divine Phoenix Island. Of course, she might be the head maid and have the fortune of serving the daily living arrangements of a direct disciple.

When Zhou Xinyu had been led forwards by Zhang Zhen, she had felt a bit foggy. She didn't have the qualifications to participate in the morning's birthday banquet, so she hadn't witnessed the fight between the Kings of the younger generation that everyone was abuzz about. She had only heard the details through Zhang Zhan, who had also exaggerated many parts. But in her heart, she still found it hard to believe. A Pulse Condensation period youth was able to compare to a Xiantian master?

Zhou Xinyu didn't need to listen to anything else. Just this thought was enough to be a demonic curse that branded itself onto her heart, making her feel as if she were living a waking dream.

The Xiantian realm... that was once a goal that Zhou Xinyu had struggled towards, and was also the symbol of being a Moon Seizing Sect Elder. If Zhou Xinyu ever saw any of these Elders, she had to be completely respectful and bow.

But now, Lin Ming had attained strength that was equal to an inner court Elder of the Moon Seizing Sect?

As Zhou Xinyu was lost in thought, suddenly she heard Zhang Zhen cry out, "Big Brother Lin, Big Brother Lin!" As Zhang Zhen held a roasted blue-eyed pheasant in one hand, he madly waved to the approaching Lin Ming with the other.

If she didn't see this with her own eyes, Zhou Xinyu would hardly have believed it. This core disciple of Divine Phoenix Island who had just been full of swagger and bluster a few days ago, was actually charmingly smiling at Lin Ming, taking the role of a little brother greeting his big brother.

Lin Ming had just come back from meeting with old lady Yuhuang and had been invited to participate in this bonfire party. Without a doubt, he was tonight's center lead.

The entire bonfire party was suddenly in pandemonium, everyone's eyes turning to look at him. In most of these eyes shined worship and admiration. Of course, there were also some

eyes that were filled with envy. And for most of the people here, this was the first time that they had seen Lin Ming.

“He’s Lin Ming? He doesn’t seem like he would be as strong as a Xiantian martial artist.” A 15 or 16 year old inner court disciple suddenly said. As he looked at the aura that Lin Ming exuded, it was much worse than a Xiantian realm master.

“You stupid idiot, you know nothing. Senior-apprentice Brother Lin usually keeps his aura hidden. When he needs to, in a critical moment he can erupt with endless strength. Not only that, but he can erupt twice! It’s no problem for his momentum to increase by five, six, seven, eight times over!”

In the battle with Lei Mubai, Lin Ming’s true essence had erupted twice. The first was when he has used the power of Tempering Marrow, and the second time was when he had opened the Heretical God Force. The impression that this had left on everyone’s mind was simply too deep.

After Lin Ming arrived, he saw Mu Xiaoqing and Mu Dingshan and smiled at them in greeting. Then he walked over to Zhang Zhen and sat beside him.

“Zhou Xinyu?” Lin Ming discovered that Zhou Xinyu was also there.

“Mm, Senior-apprentice Brother Zhang allowed me to come.” Zhou Xinyu carefully put down the barbecue in her hands and said, “I want to thank you. I became an inner court disciple of Divine

Phoenix Island and... Her Highness the Saintess also allowed me to study a jade slip with the first layer of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. She also promised that within a month she will transplant the Vermillion Bird bloodline within me.”

Zhou Xinyu’s voice was a bit cautious. Lin Ming’s halo was simply too bright and dazzling now. She unconsciously spoke to him in a respectful manner. As for the young and fanciful thoughts of a girl that she had held for Lin Ming after he had repeatedly rescued her from danger, she had already deeply suppressed these within her heart.

“Good, I’m happy for you.” Lin Ming had mentioned Zhou Xinyu’s matter to Mu Qianyu. With a word from Mu Qianyu, this situation was quickly resolved. Of course, the Vermillion Bird bloodline that Zhou Xinyu would have transplanted within her was far inferior to the one that Lin Ming would receive through the Vermillion Bird blood essence. Although each inner court disciple had the Vermillion Bird bloodline, it was also divided by rank. Mu Qianyu had promised a very high rank to Zhou Xinyu, enough for her to practice the first few layers of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, and also to obtain a certain fire-attribute true essence fusion compatibility.

With the pleasant and enjoyable atmosphere of the party, Lin Ming was introduced to everyone by Zhang Zhen. Among many of these were the direct disciples of Divine Phoenix Island, including Yan Fuhong.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Yan.” Lin Ming smiled as he cupped

his hands across his chest.

Yan Fuhong's face was somewhat stiff. Originally he would rather die than attend this party, but all the other direct disciples and core disciples were participating. If he didn't come, that would be a blatant admission of his guilt.

Yan Fuhong's heart was troubled. If he had known earlier just how abnormal this Lin Ming was, he would never have had the courage to oppose him. In the future, Lin Ming had the possibility to be a character that exceeded the likes of Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun. If old lady Yuhuang felt like it, she might even randomly assign a title on Lin Ming like the Saint Son of Divine Phoenix Island. Even though Yan Fuhong wasn't a small fish, he wouldn't even be enough for Lin Ming to stick between his teeth.

Yan Fuhong barely managed to cling to the bitter and pained smile on his face. He didn't know whether or not Zhang Yunjian had sold him out, but with Lin Ming's current influence, if he had asked Zhan Yunjian, Zhan Yunjian would absolutely speak the truth. As he thought this, Yan Fuhong's face was like a beaten up eggplant. He raised his head and took a drink of his wine, hesitating as to whether or not he should confess everything and beg for mercy. But at this time, Lin Ming had already turned to leave. Yan Fuhong let out a long sigh of relief, his palms sweaty.

After he had been introduced to most of the disciples present, Lin Ming found a free seat near a bonfire and sat down, placing his total concentration into cooking barbecue. Lin Ming liked barbecue, and he was also very talented at cooking.

Quickly, Lin Ming became to focus of everyone at this bonfire. Of course, the attention of the female disciples was unavoidable. The female disciples of Divine Phoenix Island were famous throughout the entire South Horizon Region; they were top in both quantity and quality. Most of the disciples at this party were women, and they were dressed in exquisite clothing; this was truly a gathering of beauties.

During this period, from time to time an amazingly gorgeous and well-dressed girl would intentionally or unintentionally sashay over to where Lin Ming was at this bonfire.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Lin, that fire origin energy fluctuation I felt during that evening at the Parasol Tree Pavilion was so fierce. I heard that Senior-apprentice Brother Lin has studied the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ for only a few months to reach this level. I’ve practiced for two years and have just broken through to the second layer. Perhaps Senior-apprentice Brother Lin could come over some time and personally guide me?”

A cute and lovable 15 or 16 year girl gazed at Lin Ming with her black eyes shining, hope and longing within them.

“Uh, well... I’ve also only reached the second layer. If I can cultivate to a higher layer, I will have the opportunity to assist you.”

“Really! If Senior-apprentice Brother Lin says so, then a promise is a promise.”

“Mm. A promise is a promise.”

“Senior-apprentice Brother Lin, can you taste this chicken wing that I’ve roasted?” Another cute girl came along. She had brought a carefully selected pheasant wing; this was the best one that she had managed to roast after a long time.

“Thank you.” Lin Ming faintly smiled as he received it, feeling a bit helpless. He was beginning to think that an imbalance between men and women wasn’t necessarily a good thing.

Divine Phoenix Island had an excess of female disciples. If any one of these Divine Phoenix Island girls were to be placed in the mortal world or a small sect, they would be the proud and most talented woman there. Naturally, they had no liking for mortal men. Without mentioning, just the gap of youth between a martial artist and a mortal was enough. As for marrying the disciples of other fourth-grade sects, they would have to face the choice of leaving the sect. But once they left, they wouldn’t be able to continue practicing Divine Phoenix Island’s cultivation methods. And as for staying to enhance the Vermillion Bird bloodline purity in their bodies, that would become impossible.

Because of these reasons, the female disciples of Divine Phoenix Island tried as hard as they could to marry within the sect. Therefore all of the male disciples were extremely sought after. In fact, it was common for very outstanding male disciples to have many wives and concubines. For instance, with Zhang Zhen, a disciple of his level might have several maid disciples serving him in the bedroom even after he was married. A disciple like that

within Divine Phoenix Island was equivalent to a janitor disciple of the Seven Profound Valleys in status – there was simply a massive number of them.

Most of the female disciples of Divine Phoenix Island would rather be a concubine than marry into strange and distant fourth grade sects. But as a concubine, they also had to settle on someone. Appearances were secondary. What was most important were their talent and potential.

Someone like Lin Ming, who was very handsome and was also strong to the point of being abnormal, would naturally be their top choice.

Although the female disciples of Divine Phoenix Island had a very noble and virtuous personality, when they were looking for a man, they would drop any qualms they had. Especially when it came to such a top choice like Lin Ming, the slightest bit of hesitation would cause them to lose out.

At first, there were just some girls that came up to chat with Lin Ming out of accident or design. Then, there were girls that started to come up to him, giving him barbecue to taste. Soon a massive plate near Lin Ming was piling over with barbecue. When Zhang Zhen saw this, he was speechless. His stomach was rumbling with hunger, and yet Lin Ming wouldn't even be able to eat all this.

Zhang Zhen couldn't help but take out a few pieces of barbecue from that giant pile. He hadn't even bitten into it when he felt a chill climb up his back. He turned around and was surprised to see several young girls glaring at him with deathly murder in their

eyes. Zhang Zhen’s neck shrank, and his courage dimmed as he quickly and meekly placed back the barbecue.

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As the bonfire party reached its peak, Mu Qianyu arrived. Several of the surrounding disciples saw her and quickly stood up to bow. Mu Qianyu smiled and said, “Everyone relax, please be casual. Today I’ve only come to have a look at the fun, there’s no need to pay attention to me.”

As Mu Qianyu said this, she walked over to the bonfire that Lin Ming was sitting at.

Chapter 390 – Absorbing the Blood

Extinguishing Demon Thunder

At the central region of the bonfire party, there was a bevy of six or seven young girls excitedly speaking as they formed a circle. Along with everyone else, it was simply packed tight with people close enough to push each other.

“Lin Ming.” A woman’s crisp and clear voice sounded.

Lin Ming turned his head to see that the one who spoke was Mu Qianyu.

All the disciples that were sitting around the fire quickly rose up to salute. Compared to an Elder of Divine Phoenix Island, Mu Qianyu’s status was even higher than some.

Mu Qianyu smiled and said, “Lei Mubai is locked up in the dungeon, would you like to go and see him now?”

Lin Ming was slightly stunned, then he happily said, “Alright.”

Before this, Lin Ming had been called over to Mu Yuhuang, and they had conversed for a good two hours. He didn’t even have time to spare a thought to Lei Mubai.

When Mu Qianyu arrived, the entire atmosphere of the party became wary. Mu Qianyu glanced at all the young girls that

surrounded Lin Ming and faintly smiled, sending him a true essence sound transmission, “Do you think my Divine Phoenix Island is heaven on earth for male disciples?”

Lin Ming’s voice paused. He ruefully smiled. “Miss Mu, please don’t joke with me. It was just a short time but I’ve already had to make many promises to them.”

“Haha,” Mu Qianyu chuckled, “from now on you may call me Senior-apprentice Sister. Honorable Master has already received you as a disciple. Also, Master Ancestor would like to see you.”

“Mm.”

“Master Ancestor should probably want to discuss the matter of entering the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. That’s right, weren’t you interested in all those things that Lei Mubai had?”

“I am indeed interested.” Lin Ming honestly replied.

“Mm. Master said to hand everything to you as long as you don’t kill him. As I remember, your methods were sufficiently ruthless. The elder that was healing Lei Mubai used a great deal of top medicines, but that fellow is still lying half-dead without much hope to live longer. All of the meridians in his body have been depleted and shattered, and his martial arts have been wasted.” Mu Qianyu looked at Lin Ming, a deep expression in her eyes. This was the first time that she had seen such a martial arts crippling technique. She had no idea where Lin Ming could have studied this from.

Lin Ming laughed twice and didn't answer. The Realm of the Gods' Pulse Cutting Palm was an extremely sinister and cruel move. As for wanting to heal the damage, well... not even the miracle medicines of the Realm of the Gods might be effective, much less anything that could be found within the Sky Spill Continent.

“Let's go.”

The two of them left the Parasol Tree Pavilion together and walked towards Divine Phoenix Island's dungeons.

The Divine Phoenix Island dungeon was located within the hillside and extended several hundred feet deep. Within the depths of the dungeon was an array formation. Once this array formation was fully activated, its defensive capabilities were strong enough to withstand even the full bombardment of a Revolving Core master.

Within the deepest reaches of the dungeon, there was a sealed stone chamber. Lei Mubai was lying there on the ground as if he were dead, his complexion was wan like he had lost all his blood. His spatial ring had already been taken out and placed on a table where it was sealed up, and the Great Desolate Blood Halberd replica was also set aside.

Lin Ming looked at Lei Mubai in this state and knew that his heart had already died. A proud man whose arrogance had sunk into his bones, and had vainly dreamed to one day rule the world and control the fate of all others in his hand, had suddenly suffered

such a great attack. In this situation, losing all hope was a completely normal event.

“Lin Ming, you seemed to care about the Thunder Soul in Lei Mubai, right?” Mu Qianyu asked.

“Mm.” Lin Ming nodded.

Mu Qianyu’s eyebrow arched up. “If I’m not wrong, the final move that you defeated Lei Mubai with not only used a Thunder Soul, but also a Flame Essence?”

Mu Qianyu had a special physique and was very sensitive to anything related to fire. Lin Ming’s Thunderfire Annihilation had passed in an instant, but the energy of the Flame Essence had been sensed by Mu Qianyu.

Lin Ming hesitated a bit before honestly acknowledging this. He would be in contact with Mu Qianyu for a long time. Sooner or later, she would find out his secret. Lin Ming said, “My body is special. I can absorb many Thunder Souls and Flame Essences.”

Although she had speculated about this earlier, hearing Lin Ming’s affirmation caused Mu Qianyu to take a deep breath. Just what kind of bloodline did Lin Ming have? He was actually able to absorb multiple Thunder Souls and Flame Essences? This was simply unheard of!

Normally, as a martial artist’s strength grew, they would need to

replace the Thunder Soul or Flame Essence within their body. After someone had a Thunder Soul or Flame Essence within their body for a long time, they would be able to smoothly utilize its strength. But once they traded it in for another, more powerful one, they would need to adapt to the new properties of the Thunder Soul or Flame Essence, completely learning and developing new skills. This was a process that took a very long time.

But, Lin Ming was actually able to absorb multiple Thunder Souls and Flame Essences. Not only would he be able to avoid the hassle in this aspect, but he could also increase the power of thunder and fire within his body. This was simply a talent that defied the heavens!

Mu Qianyu looked at Lin Ming as if she were looking at some spooky monster. “Just how many Thunder Souls and Flame Essences can you absorb?”

“This... well, I don’t really know.” Lin Ming didn’t know whether or not the Heretical God Seed had an upper limit. The Supreme Elder of the Realm of the Gods hadn’t possessed this secret skill for a long time. Before he could thoroughly research it, he had been reduced to ashes. Now, everything was left over for Lin Ming to ponder himself.

Not wanting to continue this line of questioning, Lin Ming took out a small crystal bottle from his spatial ring. There was a small red crystal sphere sealed within.

“That’s right, this is for you...”

Mu Qianyu looked at the small crystal bottle and a surprised expression crossed her face, “This is the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal? You still have it?”

Mu Qianyu saw that this Shattered Demon Heart Crystal looked complete, very different to the one third he had left from proving Lei Mubai’s guilt. This sort of treasure would make Xiantian masters of any sect jealous; how could Lin Ming have so many?

“Mm, this is a gift for you.”

Lin Ming placed the small crystal bottle in Mu Qianyu’s hand. He smiled, jokingly saying, “Since I entered the sect and have a master now, I should give Senior-apprentice Sister a gift on the first meeting.”

Mu Qianyu was in the process of breaking through to the Revolving Core realm. Although reaching the Revolving Core realm was only a matter of time, if she had the help of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, she might be able to make her breakthrough several months earlier. To a top genius, several months was an incomparably precious amount of time.

Mu Qianyu stared at the small crystal bottle that Lin Ming had placed in her hand and muttered, “I really don’t know what sort of special body you have. You actually ate this Shattered Demon Heart Crystal!”

“Mm, I ate a bit more than half.” Lin Ming casually said.

Mu Qianyu already felt a bit numb. This was a top miracle medicine that even a Xiantian master had to be careful when taking. As for Lin Ming, he had swallowed half with a mere Pulse Condensation period cultivation. Really, this special body of his was too abnormal.

She eventually took the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal. She had wanted to say some word of thanks, but as the words reached her lips, she felt a bit sentimental and decided not to say anything. As she thought back, Mu Qianyu remembered that just half a year ago, she and Lin Ming were strangers. But now, their relationship had developed to the stage where she could accept such a gift without needing to thank him. It was just like they were close siblings.

As she realized they had such a close relationship, Mu Qianyu felt warm in her heart. She looked at Lin Ming with a trace of happiness in her eyes and smiled. “Are you going to absorb the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder? Would you like me to help?”

“Mm. It would be great if you could stay around, just in case something happens.”

As he opened the dungeon seal, Lin Ming went to investigate Lei Mubai’s condition. At this point, his cultivation had already dropped to the Flesh Training stage. Not only was that, but the residual true essence in his body continued to dissipate. Sooner or later, it would all disappear. After another day or two, Lei Mubai would become a cripple; his body would even be worse than a

normal mortal's.

“Lin Ming...” Lei Mubai's eyes opened as he looked towards the heavens, his mouth spasming as he spat out this hateful name that had become unforgettable to him.

Lin Ming didn't respond. Instead, he undid the seal on the table and took Lei Mubai's spatial ring.

“You will die! Wait until the day that the South Sea Demon Region tramples over Divine Phoenix Island! On that day you will be flayed alive and destroyed without even a body to bury!”

Lei Mubai's life was at its end, and his heart was like dying embers. Now, the only thing that supported him was his undying and eternally utter hatred of Lin Ming.

Lin Ming grabbed onto Lei Mubai's arm and began to link his true essence to the Heretical God Seed. As he clearly felt the energy coming from the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder, the Heretical God Seed within him began to restlessly spin about.

This was a low-grade earth-step Thunder Soul that was no worse than his Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder. If it wasn't for the fact that Lei Mubai's cultivation was completely wasted at this time, it would be impossible to seize it.

The Heretical God Seed began to excitedly whine. Lin Ming poured true essence into Lei Mubai's body, turning it into a net of

true essence that covered the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder.

Because of Lei Mubai's weakened state, the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder didn't have much ability to resist. After a quarter of an hour passed, Lin Ming's true essence net had finally tightly wrapped around the Thunder Soul.

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder fiercely struggled under the true essence shackles. However, under the formidable coercive pressure of the Heretical God Seed, there wasn't much trouble it could cause.

Puff!

With a light sound, the blood red Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder was violently pulled out. Lei Mubai's entire body fiercely trembled and he vomited a mouthful of blood. He immediately went limp on the ground as if someone had pulled out his spine.

All of Lei Mubai's ambitions and hopes had come to an end. As Lin Ming looked at his pitiful and wretched appearance, he didn't feel a single ounce of pity or compassion in his heart. Someday, if Lei Mubai ever became an extreme Revolving Core Supreme Elder or even a Peerless Emperor powerhouse, there was no telling how many rivers of blood would flow or how many people would die because they had been used for him to cultivate his martial arts.

As the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder appeared, it was just like a red serpent. Crimson energy recklessly erupted from it, as if

it wanted to fly into Lin Ming's body and suck up all his blood essence.

Lin Ming locked his hands together, and according to the method of sealing a Thunder Soul, drew up dozens of runes. All of these runes fell onto the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder, causing its radiance to dim by a few degrees. After several breaths of time, Lin Ming was able to galvanize his azure true essence into forming a cage, imprisoning the savage Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder.

The deep red Thunder Soul smashed against the cage that imprisoned it. However, it was unable to break through the endless azure true essence.

“This really is a sinister and evil Thunder Soul.”

Lin Ming let out a light breath. Even though it was trapped in a cage, he could still clearly feel the rich blood energy and atmosphere that emitted from the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder. It was as if he had been caught in a hellish blood pond, and all the blood vitality in his body was being sucked out.

“There's a quiet room at the side. I'll guard you.” Mu Qianyu said.

“Mm.”

After he walked into the nearby quiet room, Lin Ming sat down

on the stone bed and placed a hand on the cage. Suddenly, the true essence he was revolving erupted. A powerful force filtered through the Heretical God Seed and began to influence the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder.

In that moment, the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder that was crazily smashing against its cage suddenly felt uneasy. The vast pressure coming from the Heretical God Seed was causing it to feel fear.

As the immense cover of pressure began to fall down, the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder felt increasingly uneasy. Its manic efforts of breaking out of the true essence cage increased as it impacted the cage again and again. A crack had actually developed in the endless azure true essence, spreading out!

“Do you need me to help?” Mu Qianyu asked. Lin Ming had to handle the last and final absorbing process himself. But, she could still assist in suppressing the Thunder Soul at the start.

“No need!” As the azure true essence cage finally broke, Lin Ming reached out a hand and grabbed the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder. Then, he pressed it into his chest!

Chapter 391 – New Thunder Soul

As Mu Qianyu saw what Lin Ming had done, she was scared into a cold sweat. Lin Ming had actually directly pressed the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder towards his heart! But, the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder was an evil existence that could swallow blood essence. Directly putting such a thing into your heart was just too risky!

“Lin Ming, you...”

Chi chi!

The clothes on Lin Ming’s chest were burned to ash. In that instant, his skin there had also lost color. This was the direct result of the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder absorbing one’s blood essence!

Mu Qianyu’s mind jumped. But as she thought of the repeated miracles that Lin Ming had accomplished in the past half year, she didn’t say anything. Instead, she fished around in her ring for some pills that could help replenish blood. She found a Nine Revolution Blood Vitality pill, and gave it to Lin Ming.

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder could swallow one’s blood essence. Having a pill that could restore the power of blood vitality a bit would greatly assist in alleviating the pressure on Lin Ming.

Lin Ming swallowed the Nine Revolution Blood Vitality Pill and

waved his head, saying, “I’m alright.”

Initially, when his cultivation was only at the peak Bone Forging stage, he had been able to absorb the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder. Now that his cultivation had increased by a great deal, it naturally wouldn’t be dangerous to absorb the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder.

In fact, as the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder entered his heart, it was already completely suppressed by the Heretical God Seed. Due to their toughness and strength, Lin Ming’s meridians were already able to withstand nearly any impact it could offer.

As for the blood that the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder was swallowing, or even the blood essence, Lin Ming simply didn’t care. This was a necessary process in absorbing the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder.

One had to use their own blood vitality and blood essence to feed the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder.

If the power of one’s blood vitality wasn’t enough, then the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder would suck dry all of that person’s blood, and that person would die. Afterwards, the Thunder Soul would just escape.

On the other hand, if one’s power of blood vitality was robust enough and their meridians were also tough enough, they would be able to suppress and control the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder. As for their blood essence that it had absorbed, it would

all become their own again. As long as the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder didn't escape, there would be no loss.

But the feeling of having the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder absorbing his blood essence was also a very unpleasant sensation. Lin Ming felt half his body go cold, and his hands and feet became dull. His sense of touch was becoming less sensitive, and he felt like the other half of his body didn't even belong to him.

The power of thunder within the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder had a very powerful corrosive effect. When it circulated in one's meridians, it was no different than a strong acid – it was an incomparably burning and painful feeling. Along with the mass consumption of blood essence, one would feel like they were dying.

Mu Qianyu could clearly see thin black strings running out from Lin Ming's heart like words, spreading everywhere throughout his body. They spread to his arms, his legs, and even his neck.

This was the breath of death; it was caused by the loss of a massive amount of blood essence.

Mu Qianyu had a certain understanding of the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder. Although there were many martial artists that were able to finally absorb it, their body would suffer a major deficit in their blood and undergo necrosis in certain parts because of a lack of blood. Afterwards, they would have to spend a long period of time recuperating in bed. She didn't hope that this was what would happen to Lin Ming. If the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm officially opened and Lin Ming wasn't able to attend, he

would need to wait another three years. Once he was almost 20 years old, he would have missed the best time to participate.

As Mu Qianyu thought this, she also took out a Blood Yang Pill from her spatial ring. This Blood Yang Pill was refined from 1000 year old Blood Yang Lingzhi and was a priceless treasure. It was also one of the pills that Mu Qianyu saved as life insurance.

“Lin Ming...”

“I’m alright. I’m just letting it absorb whatever blood essence it wants. I have an idea of what I’m doing.”

Lin Ming pushed away the Blood Yang Pill. His power of blood vitality was extremely formidable. In addition, he also had the endless azure true essence. With these things, he would be able to restrain the breath of death that spread in his body. There was no need for Mu Qianyu to waste such an important pill that was used to insure her life.

The reason that he was allowing the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder to crazily swallow whatever blood essence it wanted to in his heart was to fuse with it on a deeper level and have better control over it. Finally, he would completely integrate it into the Heretical God Seed.

But he didn’t expect that the savage and greedy nature of the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder had even surpassed his imagination.

At this time, the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder in Lin Ming's body was like a massive leech that was plump with blood. With the great attractive force of the Heretical God Seed acting on his entire body, no matter how hard or frantically the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder struggled, it still wouldn't be able to escape from this vortex of suction.

“Ah”

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder suddenly uttered a hoarse scream. At one end, an open mouth formed. This mouth was only the size of a bean, but it had long rows of dense and sharp fangs. As Lin Ming looked within his body, his heart suddenly went cold; it was too spooky and unnatural for a Thunder Soul to suddenly develop a mouth with fangs in it.

“Ah! Ah!”

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder screamed over and over, and suddenly bit into the walls of Lin Ming's heart!

Puff! Flesh and blood splattered out!

Lin Ming's body shook, his face went pale. No matter how extremely formidable his blood vitality was, it was very difficult to withstand the pain of his heart being injured!

Lin Ming grit his teeth, and then conjured up a net of azure true essence that fell over the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder,

forming a cocoon that wrapped around it.

“I see... you’re the one that’s making trouble!”

Lin Ming became aware of a will that was placed within the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder, and his mouth curved up in a smile. With a thought, a crazy surge of true essence emerged around the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder. In that moment, there was only a tearing ‘chi’ sound as if a flame was going out. A wisp of a residual soul turned into smoke as it was destroyed from within the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder.

Lei Mubai, who had been lying down on the stone floor next door, fiercely trembled. He spat out a mouthful of blood, and this blood even contained a faint hint of blood essence.

His complexion was now no different than golden funeral paper. His lips trembled; he knew that the wisp of residual will that he had hid within the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder had been exterminated by Lin Ming!

He humorlessly smiled, his entire mouth wet with blood. He had placed that wisp of remnant will within the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder a long time ago, before his cultivation had been wasted. He thought that even if he couldn’t prevent Lin Ming from absorbing the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder, he should still at least be able to damage the blood vitality of his enemy. But he didn’t that that his residual will would be so easily destroyed.

Lei Mubai was filled with a sense of despair. His eyes looked up at

the ceiling, and now there was no longer any light left within them.

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After Lei Mubai's residual will was destroyed, the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder seemed to have lost its strength and vigor. It no longer had the ability to resist the massive attractive force, and it was sucked flying into the vortex of the Heretical God Seed.

“Ahhh!”

The Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder gave out a final miserable shriek before it was received into the coiling dragon steel needle. The two inch long coiling dragon steel needle suddenly grew to three inches, and on the surface of it appeared a small red snake. This small red snake coiled around steel needle a total of eight times.

It connected together with Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder.

Bang!

In that instant, a new coiling dragon steel needle was born, and an unbridled power of thunder erupted forth, flooding through all of Lin Ming's meridians. This power of thunder was so brutal that Lin Ming only felt his entire body shake and his skeleton pop all over. The impure pill toxins within his meridians were all burned

by a blazing hot power of thunder, instantly turning into ash!

Lin Ming stuffily coughed, then vomited a mouthful of black blood.

Mu Qianyu was shocked. She quickly held onto Lin Ming and propped him up, disregarding the taboos that existed between men and women. She extended her perception into Lin Ming's body, and suddenly she was shocked, and then immediately overjoyed.

Lin Ming's meridians had linked up once more and the tenacity of his meridians had increased by another great margin. He had finally stepped into the peak Pulse Condensation period!

“Lin Ming, you broke through!”

“Mm, it was a breakthrough.”

Lin Ming let out a long breath. He had already been stranded in the late Pulse Condensation period for far too long. During the three months he had spent at Dark Moon Island, he had built up too many pill toxins within his body. He had been constantly refining and eliminating them, but it was still very difficult to cleanly remove them all. He hadn't thought that this time, with such a savage power of thunder coursing through him, it would completely remove all of the impurities in his body. The black blood that Lin Ming had spat out was all of the pill toxins and impurities in his body.

Lin Ming's cultivation had already approached the peak Pulse Condensation period. At the banquet competition, his cultivation had consolidated once again, and in addition to breaking through to the second layer of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' as well as clearing up all of the pill toxins in his body, he had successfully reached the peak Pulse Condensation period.

"I wonder if my strength can exceed an early Xiantian master now?"

When Lin Ming opened the Heretical God Force, he was able to attain the strength to suppress a common early Xiantian master. But, the Heretical God Force could not last in perpetuity. When a battle dragged out for a long time, he would most likely lose. At best, he would fight to a draw.

Now that he had broken through to the peak Pulse Condensation period, Lin Ming's strength had surged upwards again. He wanted to find an early Xiantian master and test out his newfound strength; being comparable to an early Xiantian master and defeating one were two entirely different concepts.

He immersed his sense in the newly evolved Thunder Soul. Suddenly, Lin Ming was surprised, "Mm? There's this change?"

On the new coiling dragon steel needle, he felt two energies. He felt the manic and violent Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder that was like an unstoppable force, but he also felt the evil and cruel Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder that thirsted for life!

“It actually completely retained both Thunder Souls’ characteristics?”

“Not only that, but it was also improved to a medium-grade earth-step Thunder Soul!”

Although it was currently the weakest and most basic of the medium-grade earth-step Thunder Souls, Lin Ming was satisfied.

As Mu Qianyu saw Lin Ming’s excited appearance, she finally relaxed. It seemed that Lin Ming had managed to keep everything under control. At this time, even the black lines along Lin Ming’s body were beginning to fade away, and they soon disappeared. His original healthy looking skin was also restored to its vibrant color.

Mu Qianyu’s beautiful eyes turned. She suddenly had an idea that she wanted to take a close look at Lin Ming’s Thunder Soul. But the truth was that this sort of request was very rude and impolite for martial artists. Even between friends, one wouldn’t rashly ask to see the other’s final resort. Not only that, but this Thunder Soul also involved the secrets within Lin Ming’s body.

However, once a girl’s curiosity was aroused, it was very difficult to restrain. Mu Qianyu really wanted to know why Lin Ming was able to contain two Thunder Souls in his body. She blinked, and then softly said, “Lin Ming, may I have a look at your Thunder Soul?”

Such a soft and sweet tone was very comfortable to hear. Lin Ming also didn’t have much hesitation towards Mu Qianyu. He

directly took out the Divine Demon Thunder Soul.

Chi!

The three inch long Thunder Soul steel needle immediately leapt out from Lin Ming's fingertips and paused atop his palm, circling there as it floated.

On the steel needle, there was a Purple Flood Dragon that coiled around the body, but there was also a red serpent. One dragon, one snake – both were very vivid and lifelike. Every scale was outlined, and even their clear eyes could be seen. It was just like a real dragon and snake had been trapped within the steel needle.

As the Thunder Soul appeared, reddish-purple arcs of electricity scattered out in all directions, and the thunder origin energy of the entire stone chamber suddenly became frenzied as if it were constantly being sucked into the Divine Demon Thunder Soul, forming a purplish red vortex.

Mu Qianyu's bright eyes widened, shock coloring her expression. "This... this is the Thunder Soul?"

Chapter 392 – Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm

This was the first time that Mu Qianyu had seen a Thunder Soul that looked like this. A Thunder Soul could manifest into an object, but, a martial artist needed to compress their true essence to an extreme degree. But Lin Ming's Thunder Soul didn't seem to have any compressed true essence to it, and yet it already had this appearance.

“Can I... touch it?” Mu Qianyu asked, after hesitating for a moment.

“Of course you can.” Lin Ming replied. There wasn't any danger in touching the Divine Demon Thunder Soul when it was in this state. Not only that, but the truth was that even if he stimulated the Divine Demon Thunder Soul to its maximum strength, it was just impossible to wound someone like Mu Qianyu who had an extreme Xiantian cultivation.

Mu Qianyu stretched out a jade-like finger, and gently placed her fingertip firmly on the Divine Demon Thunder Soul. As she traced her finger up Lin Ming's steel needle, she was able to feel an ice cold sensation, as if this Thunder Soul steel needle was really made of metal.

“How amazing...” Mu Qianyu was aware that this was part of Lin Ming's secret, and was certainly related to his special physique. That Lin Ming would be so unreserved in sharing such a secret with her really caused a strange sensation to flutter in her heart.

She faintly smiled, and then retracted her jade-like finger. She said, “The Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm will open half a month from now. You should rest well tonight. Tomorrow, the High Ancestor will see you. She’ll also pass down Vermillion Bird blood essence as well as the transplantation method so that you can obtain a greater harvest in the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.”

“Mm, ah, yes, the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal that I gave to you earlier, you should absorb it here if it’s convenient.”

Mu Qianyu thought about it for a moment and then said, “Okay.”

In order to take the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, one needed to fuse it with their blood essence to guide it into their body. Mu Qianyu bit her own finger, and then forced a drop of blood essence into the crystal bottle. After the dark red blood and the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal touched, the blood immediately began to bubble in excitement, the blood rolling around in waves. The Shattered Demon Heart Crystal began to melt until it finally became a thick, viscous red liquid within the bottle.

An endlessly vivid energy spread out along with it, as if this bottle of dark red liquid came from an unknown world. It was like an ancient and undiscovered gate was slowly opening its doors to Mu Qianyu.

“It’s so mystifying!” Mu Qianyu said.

“This Shattered Demon Heart Crystal contains the residual will of the Netherworld Great Emperor. Once I absorb his will, my

understanding of the origin of all martial arts will also deepen by a bit.”

Mu Qianyu nodded, and swallowed down the bottle of sticky red liquid. The sweet, coppery taste of blood began to spread within her mouth.

As the red liquid entered her body, she immediately felt the blood within her body move, as if it were boiling. A scalding heat began to swell up, spreading along her meridians and heating up her body.

“Mm?”

Mu Qianyu’s mind shook, and she was suddenly pulled back to her spiritual sea. The scene that Lin Ming had seen before was now replaying itself in front of Mu Qianyu. Mu Qianyu saw the Netherworld Great Emperor grasp his great axe and crazily slaughter 10,000 demons until the heavens themselves were dyed red in blood. This was truly a shocking sight.

Mu Qianyu had a profound cultivation. Although she hadn’t yet reached the Revolving Core realm, she was already comparable to a common early Revolving Core martial artist. As for her combat strength, it was even beyond that. Thus, the remnant will of the Netherworld Great Emperor wasn’t able to shake her mind.

It was just the energy that was contained within the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, but Mu Qianyu wasn’t able to absorb in in a short time. This was a complete Shattered Demon Heart Crystal,

and her cultivation was lower than Elder Jin and Elder Bai's by a great degree. Mu Qianyu's breathing quickened, and she began to perspire with drops of fragrant sweat.

“How do you feel?”

“A bit hot.”

Mu Qianyu took a handkerchief from her spatial ring and wiped away her sweat. Her neck was flushed red with blood.

As Lin Ming saw the beads of crystal clear sweat drip down Mu Qianyu's pale cheeks, he was dazed for a moment. To him, it seemed as if there were simply no impurities within her body. Otherwise, if she ate this sort of pill that washed the muscles and marrows, she should at least have discharged some impurities.

However, as he remembered Mu Qianyu's daily life in Divine Phoenix Island where she only ate the rare and valuable fruits of spirit valleys and drank the sweet morning dew, he realized that it was normal for her to have no impurities in her body. When Lin Ming had first eaten half of the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, his entire body had bled from the head down, but Mu Qianyu had only sweat a bit.

The sweat matted her hair and caused her clothes to stick tightly onto her body. This was quite an uncomfortable feeling. Mu Qianyu couldn't bear this, so she tugged at her wet clothes, accentuating the contours of her body.

Seeing this sight, Lin Ming couldn't help but swallow a mouthful of saliva. A bit embarrassed, he said, "I'll go and get some ice water."

"No need. I'll finish soon, I've already absorbed more than half. After this I'll take a bath." As she spoke, Mu Qianyu seemed to suddenly realize something and her cheeks flushed red. She moved her fire-attribute true essence and all the sweat on her body evaporated.

As her clothes dried and loosened again, that beautiful spring scene disappeared. "Tomorrow morning I will take you to see the High Ancestor."

Lin Ming awkwardly coughed, "Okay."

.....

On the back mountains of Divine Phoenix Island, there was an abundance of green plants in bloom. At this time in the morning, a dense mist shrouded the mountain, the entire mountain looking like a picturesque scene from a painting. A spring stream trickled, and a gentle breeze rolled in. The music of the morning faintly sounded in the air.

Between the bamboo groves, there were deep and winding trails that spread through. On the bamboo leaves was fresh morning dew that dripped down. As Lin Ming walked down the trail, he sighed; this was truly like an immortal paradise on earth.

This bamboo grove was where Mu Fengxian lived in seclusion – Emerald Bamboo Pavilion.

At the end of the path, there was an elegant bamboo house. As one walked up, they could smell the fragrant bamboo mixed with a deep earthy scent, causing anyone here to feel relaxed and comfortable.

As Mu Qianyu and Lin Ming arrived, they were about to announce themselves when Mu Fengxian's voice sounded out, "Come in."

"Lin Ming, Honorable Master has called for you. I'll wait for you here."

Lin Ming nodded, then opened the bamboo leaf door and strode in.

The furnishings within the bamboo house were very simple. There were a few wicker chairs and a plain wooden table. As one walked on the bamboo floor, they could even hear a creaking sound.

Mu Fengxian was sat on one of these wicker chairs and wore a long red dress. Her silver hair was tied back with a hairpin, and she smiled as she looked at Lin Ming, glancing over at a wicker chair opposite to her. "Sit down."

"Mm."

Lin Ming politely sat down.

Mu Fengxian had already heard the news that Lin Ming had broken through to the peak Pulse Condensation period and wasn't surprised. She poured a cup of tea and handed it to Lin Ming, slowly saying, "As Yuhuang's personal disciple, you may call me Master Ancestor. Half a month from now, the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm will open. Do you know what the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm is?"

Lin Ming shook his head. Before now, all he had heard about the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm were some vague rumors, and he didn't know any specifics.

"The Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm is a legacy that the Ancient Phoenix Clan left behind. Its history goes back tens of thousands of years – or even hundreds of thousands of years..."

Lin Ming was shocked, "That long? But Divine Phoenix Island is only..."

"Mm. Divine Phoenix Island only has a history of 3000 years. My Divine Phoenix Island may claim to be descendants of the Ancient Phoenix Clan, but the truth is that 3000 years ago, my Divine Phoenix Island was just a third-grade sect with mostly female cultivators. At that time, Silent Demon Emperor City had just risen to prominence. Because my Divine Phoenix Island had many young female disciples, the sect feared that they would be attacked by Silent Demon Emperor City, and the women captured as slaves to

use in sexual cultivation. Thus, the sect decided to relocate and escape to the South Sea's Divine Phoenix Island. This island wasn't originally called Divine Phoenix Island. Instead, it was named that afterwards.

“After the sect was stationed here, the Sect Master came across a great lucky chance within Divine Phoenix Island. She was the first person to enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. After she came out, she had managed to obtain the Vermillion Bird bloodline, the Blue Luan bloodline, and a massive amount of treasures. Afterwards, she founded Divine Phoenix Island. Therefore, to my Divine Phoenix Island, the Divine Phoenix Mystic realm is its origin and also its lifeblood.”

As Lin Ming heard this, he was shocked. This was the first time that he had heard the history of Divine Phoenix Island. Because the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm could only be accessed by the disciples of Divine Phoenix Island, he had assumed that it was a smelting trial that the disciples used to practice.

But this explanation also made sense.

“Master Ancestor, what happened to the Sect Master afterwards?” Lin Ming couldn't help but ask.

“That Sect Master was also the founder of my Divine Phoenix Island. Afterwards, she paused at the extreme Revolving Core realm, and her immortal soul entered the eternal Samsara over 2000 years ago.”

Lin Ming sighed, this was to be expected. Otherwise, there was no way that Divine Phoenix Island would only be a fourth-grade sect. “The founder obtained such a great lucky chance but still wasn’t able to become a Peerless Emperor. No wonder they say there are only a mere 10 Peerless Emperors within the entire Sky Spill Continent.”

“Hahaha,” Mu Fengxian smiled. “The path from Revolving Core to Peerless Emperor is truly a long and unbearable road. Break into Revolving Core before 30, extreme Revolving Core before 50, and become a Peerless Emperor at 100 years! Just this step is able to trap countless unrivalled geniuses for 50 years. But although there are countless hardships and obstacles, there are far more than a mere 10 Peerless Emperor powerhouses. It’s just that you are too weak so you have no way of knowing any of this. Many Peerless Emperor powerhouses live in seclusion in certain desolate lands of the world. Of course, even if there are some that occasionally appear, you would never know this.”

Lin Ming nodded. As one climbed up to a mountain peak, they would also be able to see the scenery below that mountain peak. If he ever became a Peerless Emperor powerhouse, he would also be able to step into the world of a Peerless Emperor.

Mu Fengxian stood up. She took a red box from her spatial ring and handed it to Lin Ming, saying, “This is Vermillion Bird blood essence. Place it onto your bodily acupoints a drop at a time and you will gain the qualifications to practice the core sections of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. You must slowly build this up, and then diligently work towards stepping into the Revolving Core realm. As for becoming a Peerless Emperor, your talent is enough; the rest will depend on your destiny!”

Throughout the ages, there were many martial artists that had the talent to become a Peerless Emperor. But the vast majority of them fell or had an accident, and were ultimately unable to step foot in this realm.

Lin Ming took a deep breath and respectfully thanked Mu Fengxian, he then put away the Vermillion Bird blood essence. He would etch this kindness into his heart.

Mu Fengxian nodded and said, “Now go. Half a month from now, the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm will open, and you will gain one of the spots to enter the Ancient Phoenix main hall. During this time, make sure you practice well.

Lin Ming bowed and then left. Mu Fengxian sighed, a deep emotion swelling in her chest. Destiny was an illusory dream. As for how great Lin Ming’s destiny was, it would manifest during his trip to the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.

To people, destiny was like a rainbow. For instance, the founder of Divine Phoenix Island was able to obtain a great lucky chance inside. However, it was a pity that the founder’s talent was missing a single step, and they were ultimately unable to become a Peerless Emperor.

Chapter 393 – Drops of Blood, Entering the Mystic Realm

The ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ was an extremely broad and profound cultivation method. As Lin Ming practiced more and more, he increasingly became aware of this point. Not only was the cultivation method to practice contained within, but there were also many techniques to control fire, fire-attribute martial skills, and most importantly, there was also the understanding of others regarding the origin of fire. That is to say, the Concept of Fire.

Something like a Concept could only be realized through one’s own contemplation, it couldn’t be explained. Just a few words were enough to provide many nights of deep reflection.

In addition, there were also ways to cultivate the mind and heart. There were ways to adjust one’s mentality to communicate with fire origin energy, so that a martial artist could completely immerse themselves in a sea of fire origin energy and break through their shackles.

However, these mysterious skills all depended on one’s own understanding and studying. As for Lin Ming’s perception, it was considered quite good. In these recent days, he had learned a great deal.

Time passed day by day. Lin Ming would wake up every morning and absorb the rising energy from the fire of the sun, practicing all day. At night, he would again ponder the cultivation methods. Such a day seemed boring, but the wonderful feel of advancing in

one's cultivation let Lin Ming be at ease and happy.

Of course, not every day was spent on statically practicing from dawn till dusk. Occasionally, there would be a 15 or 16 year old girl, or even a group of them together, coming to Lin Ming, asking him for guidance on some puzzling questions about the cultivation method.

These girls with their soft-spoken voices, sweet tone and flushed cheeks as well as watery eyes that were filled with hope... Lin Ming found it hard to refuse them. Every time he would try to carefully explain to the best of his knowledge. In truth, Lin Ming's theoretical knowledge wasn't much, but fortunately, these girls were usually the lower end disciples at the Pulse Condensation period, so he was able to barely deal with their questions.

Every night, Lin Ming would take a drop of Vermillion Bird blood essence and place it on the acupoints of his body. In 12 days, he had used 12 drops of blood essence, half of which were placed between his eyebrows.

As the Vermillion Bird blood essence touched the skin between his eyebrows, he had a faint dizzy feeling as it slowly penetrated through. At this time, Lin Ming felt as if all the blood essence of his body was moving towards this spot between his eyebrows, as if it were trying to turn into a crystal there.

As this feeling slowly vanished, the Vermillion Bird blood essence was also thoroughly absorbed. Lin Ming then felt his entire body fill up with blood vitality, and energy surged within him to the point of overflowing and roughly moving everywhere in his body.

With a casual movement, he could even hear popping sounds in his bones. This was an extremely comfortable feeling. Every time it happened, he wanted to bend back and let out a great yawn.

“Drinking the immortal dew wine from the Realm of the Gods’ Supreme Elder’s memory is probably like this feeling.” These past two years, Lin Ming had eaten a great deal of medicines. But most of these medicines were extremely overbearing and contained a cruel energy; it was almost the same as eating poisoned food.

This Vermillion Bird blood essence was the first one that had felt thoroughly pleasurable as he transplanted it within himself.

In order to promote the absorption within his body, Lin Ming would take out the Purple Comet Spear after he placed a drop on his body and then practice his spear skills. After Lin Ming had his match with Elder Senior-apprentice Brother Xiao Chi from Golden Bell Mountain and competed in spear skills with him, Lin Ming’s skill at spear play had made great progress. He repeatedly practiced what he had left, and he felt the strength of his body endlessly growing.

Lin Ming looked at the leftover Vermillion Bird blood essence, there was only around 10 drops of so left; it was enough for 10 days. Seeing this made Lin Ming feel some regret.

Also, this Vermillion Bird blood essence was like the Heaven Opening Pill. The first drop would have the greatest and most obvious effect. Afterwards, each following drop would be continuously weaker. Now, on the 12 drop, the effect wasn’t even half of the first drop’s.

As this continued, he estimated that the last drop might only have around 20% of the first drop's effect. This was truly a waste.

As Lin Ming thought this, his mind suddenly stirred. Maybe he could save these last remaining drops and give them to Qin Xingxuan?

Qin Xingxuan's talent could only be considered the most basic within Divine Phoenix Island. But with the help of the Vermillion Bird blood essence, she would have a ray of hope that she could one day step into the Revolving Core realm.

However, Divine Phoenix Island had given the Vermillion Bird blood essence to Lin Ming, and that was to let Lin Ming use it. He had no right to give it away to someone else. The only way would be if Lin Ming's status rose once again, and he gained a strong enough influence and authority to do so.

Lin Ming shook his head, and temporarily erased this thought, putting away the Vermillion Bird blood essence. He would wait until he had the strength to do so before thinking about this again.

.....

In a flash, another three days passed. Finally, it was the day to enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.

Within the depths of the Divine Phoenix Island mountain range,

a spirit boat slowly landed within a clearing of the mountain valley. A line of people stepped down from the spirit boat, including Mu Yuhuang, Mu Qianyu, and Lin Ming.

This was where the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm was located. Just by looking at the surrounding scenery, it was no different than anywhere else on Divine Phoenix Island. It was just that the surrounding mountains formed a tight formation around this mountain valley, and the heaven and earth origin energy here was very vibrant, especially fire origin energy and water origin energy.

Lin Ming glanced at the disciples that would enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm with him. Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing were impressively among them. In fact, nearly all of the core disciples and direct disciples had arrived, even Zhang Zhen was among them. It was just that he wasn't eligible to enter the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall.

Seeing Lin Ming, Zhang Zhen happily smiled at him and waved.

“During this trip into the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, your primary concern should always be your own safety. Do not try anything beyond your capabilities. Understand?” Mu Yuhuang asked.

Every time the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm was opened, there might some disciples that died. Although this was a very small probability, these people – especially those that entered the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall – were those most outstanding talents that Divine Phoenix Island had cultivated. If they died every time, then Divine Phoenix Island would truly suffer.

And what was most horrifying was that life or death within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm didn't depend on one's talent or strength. The weak might live, and the strong might die.

This was mainly because those geniuses that were strong and had immense talent would always be particularly confident in their own ability, and try to reach out to a great lucky chance. Finally, the results of this would only be that the dangers that followed would multiply by several fold, and they would fall like a meteor from the heavens.

For the weaker, lower-tier disciples, having several die was bad enough. But if direct disciples on the level of Mu Dingshan died, that would cause Divine Phoenix Island to be pained like their heart was bleeding.

Mu Yuhuang's eyes swept over all the disciples that would enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm one at a time. Finally, her eyes paused on Lin Ming. She said to him in a true essence sound transmission, "Lin Ming, the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall has a history of tens of thousands of years. The Ancient Phoenix Clan also had a much richer and purer Saint Beast bloodline than we do. In fact, they might even have had the bloodline of a God Beast, and the talents that existed in their era are beyond our understanding. You may be considered a monstrous talent in this life, but compared to those existences from tens of thousands of years ago, you might not necessarily be too outstanding. Therefore, do not be blinded by your confidence, and do not try to do anything that is beyond your capabilities in the smelting trial. If something happens to you, that is a blow that my Divine Phoenix Island may not be able to bear!"

What Mu Yuhuang was most anxious about was Lin Ming. She knew that back when he had been at Thundercrash Mountain, Lin Ming had scaled the summit when he only had a cultivation at the mere peak Bone Forging stage. He had taken advantage of the battle between Mu Qianyu and the Thunder Flood Dragon to directly sneak into the Flood Dragon's cave and then loot the treasures within, finally obtaining the Violet Electricity Spirit Bamboo and the Magnetic Birthstone. Because of this Magnetic Birthstone, he was able to absorb the Purple Flood Dragon Divine Thunder. That was a Thunder Soul that only a middle Xiantian realm master could absorb, but Lin Ming had done so with just a pitiful Bone Forging stage cultivation!

At first, Lin Ming was not a disciple of Divine Phoenix Island. Thus, when Mu Yuhuang had heard of this from Mu Qianyu, she thought highly of and also appreciated Lin Ming's decisive actions and courage in the face of danger. But now, Lin Ming had become her disciple, and Mu Yuhuang's feelings had undergone a complete change. When most people saw others' children taking risks and placing themselves in danger, they might praise them. But when they saw their own children doing the same, they might not feel the same way. Instead, they would only be anxious.

If Mu Yuhuang had a choice, she would rather Lin Ming would be able to steadily and calmly reach the extreme Revolving Core realm in the future; this would also be a great additional strength to Divine Phoenix Island.

As for the path to becoming a Peerless Emperor, one needed to constantly seek opportunities. It could be said to be a dangerous path with many narrow escapes. Mu Yuhuang didn't dare to

guarantee that something as illusory and vague as destiny would be able to accompany Lin Ming through his journey. Through the ages of the Sky Spill Continent, there were countless top geniuses that had tried to become a Peerless Emperors. But the number that succeeded was mind-bogglingly low.

“Disciple understands.” Lin Ming nodded.

“Good. Well, now I will join forces with the other Elders to open up the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. The ordinary disciples usually stay inside for three days. After those three days, they will automatically be transferred outside. As for those disciples that enter the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, they will have 7 to 10 days. When the time arrives, everyone will also be sent out. Now, would any of you like to withdraw?”

After Mu Yuhuang casually asked, no one volunteered to quit. Of course, this was natural. All of the disciples were struggling for spots to enter the Divine Phoenix Mystic realm. Such insignificant danger was simply nothing to them. As people that walked on the path of martial arts, they had to experience countless life and death dangers. Even in a friendly competition of martial arts, it was possible that a situation would arise in which they would be killed. If they feared death, they would forever be stranded in the Houtian realm or Xiantian realm, and find it near impossible to ever reach the Revolving Core realm.

“Very good!”

Mu Yuhuang nodded, “Tianguang, we’ll work together to break the seal so that these juniors can go in.”

As the powerful figure of the Blue Luan Faction, Revered Master Tianguang was the representative of the Blue Luan Faction disciples. He nodded, waved his hand, and a shining blue sword flew out; this was splendidly a high-grade earth-step treasure weapon.

Mu Yuhuang gathered her hands together and released a series of flaming runes that blended together with Revered Master Tianguang's blue treasure sword. A moment later, there was a 'zi zi zi' sound, and the space in front of the crowd began to tremble as if it were the surface of a still lake that was being disturbed, ripples constantly appearing.

Suddenly, a jet black vortex appeared out of thin air, constantly spinning with the faint sound of wind and thunder coming from it. The surrounding heaven and earth origin energy frantically converged on this vortex. The origin energy around was restless, and great gusts of wind picked up, causing everyone's clothes to flutter in the wind and all the rocks and sand to fly in the air.

Finally, after several dozen breaths of time, the swirling vortex slowly stabilized and the wind died down. In front of the crowd, there was a black entrance that was 10 feet wide. This opening through the void was suspended in the air, and it was impossible to see inside, as if it were the gateway to another world.

"Go! And remember, do not do anything that exceeds your limits!" Mu Yuhuang repeatedly urged.

Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing were the first to jump in. Their figures flashed for a moment, and they were suddenly swallowed up by the black opening. Lin Ming followed them and also jumped in.

Chapter 394 – Concept of Fire

Lin Ming was dizzy from the feeling of space warping around him. By the time he opened his eyes, his heart shook. Before entering the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, Lin Ming had imagined many times just what the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm would look like. But he had never imagined that it would be such a shocking scene!

In front of Lin Ming was an endless expanse of dark red rock. It was barren, without a single touch of green, and between the red rocks were large flowing rivers of lava. These rocks seem to have been roasted red by the lava. Giant pools of boiling lava appeared everywhere, with giant bubbles of air tumbling upwards through the lava. With a thick popping sound, the noxious smell of sulfur washed out along with a billowing wave of heat. This haze was toxic, a normal person would have suffocated and died here after just a moment.

If it was this alone, Lin Ming wouldn't have been so shocked. But what he found unbelievable was that behind him was a vast field of ice!

Wind and snow mixed together, and the fields of ice were as smooth as a mirror. The tips of massive glaciers stuck up through the ground like high towers, and they glowed with a cold sheen, shining and twinkling like a field of stars. The strong wind brought a thick hail of ice that scattered in all directions, its speed like arrows. If a normal person stood here, this hail would have been enough to pierce through their body, ripping an opening through flesh!

On one side was a land of lava and on the other was a field of ice, one side blazing hot and the other freezing cold. This extremely contradictory feeling was unbelievable.

“This is the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm!” Mu Dingshan said in one breath. This was the second time that he had come here, and he had seen this scene before.

The Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm had a prohibitory limit based on one’s skeletal age. In addition, the time gap between each opening was very long. Normally speaking, a martial artist would only be able to enter here twice in their lifetime.

On the road that Lin Ming stood on, bright lights flashed periodically. With every flash of light, a new disciple was warped in. After they adapted to the strange feeling of space warping, they opened their eyes and were dumbfounded after seeing the same scene that Lin Ming saw.

This was the first time that these people had come to the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. Although some of them had already heard others describe the scene within, truly seeing it for the first time was an inexplicably shocking feeling. After all, hearing and seeing were two completely different matters.

After all of the disciples had arrived, Mu Dingshan said, “Good. This Divine Phoenix Realm is an independent world, it isn’t part of the Sky Spill Continent. The two lands of fire and ice are actually divided by an enchantment and extend a great distance. Choose

one according to your attribute and enter! Blue Luan Faction disciples enter the ice field, and the Vermillion Bird Faction disciples enter the lava world! Remember, do not forget Honorable Sect Master's warning, and take your own safety as the highest priority. Now, either go with others or go by yourself. Disperse!"

Independent world?

As soon as Lin Ming looked up, he saw that there were actually two blazingly hot suns hanging in the air. The sun of the fire world was extremely hot, and even emitted a faint blue light that looked like a massive fireball in the sky. Around the edge of the sunlight, the air itself was distorting from the heat, making the sun seem like an illusory mirage.

But the sun in the ice world seemed lifeless, like a distant and unaffected object. As the sunlight from there shined down on one's body, there wasn't even the slightest sense of heat. Instead, it only caused one to feel like they had fallen into a pool of ice water. This marvel, if not an illusion, was truly impossible to be seen within the Sky Spill Continent.

If this wasn't the Sky Spill Continent, and was a separate and individual world, then was this a world that was naturally formed, or was it a world that was created by a Supreme Elder?

Lin Ming couldn't help but indulge in his fanciful daydreams. At this time, Mu Dingshan asked, "Lin Ming, would you like to go together? Or would you like to go by yourself?"

“If I go by myself, will I be able to reach the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall? Or would I become lost?”

“No, this world has endless layers of profound principles and enigmas that direct it. No matter where you go, three days from now you will eventually come to the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall.”

“Then I’ll go alone.”

“Haha, I also suggest you go alone. This Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm is an incomparably broad and vast land. Until now, there has never been any disciple in any generation that has ever managed to trace the end of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, even though every time we are warped here brings us to a different location. The Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm contains countless lucky chances waiting around, but if several people go together, the area they will be able to cover is much smaller. Even if they come across some lucky chance, it would be difficult to split it between multiple people. If you go alone, then everything will depend on your own destiny. Naturally, that is the best path to take.”

“I would also like to advise Junior-apprentice Brother Lin that the deeper you go, the more dangers there are. If you would like to remain conservative and a bit safer, then stay around in the vicinity of the edges; there won’t be any danger there. Three days later, you can also enter the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall. Of course, if you do so, you won’t encounter any lucky chances.” Mu Dingshan was the one here with the highest understanding of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, so he told Lin Ming everything he knew.

The deeper one went, the more danger there was. But correspondingly, the lucky chances they would encounter would be greater too.

Lin Ming understood this, and he was also increasingly clear why within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, it was possible to die no matter how high your strength or talent. Or why it was possible that if one was exceptionally talented, their chance of dying was higher. This was because the temptation of exploring the deepest and most unknown parts of the mystic realm was too hard to resist.

To those that walked on the martial path and dreamed of climbing to the peak of all martial arts, these individuals had the blood and will of adventurers flowing through them; this was a desire that was impossible to suppress.

Lin Ming also wanted to journey to the depths. If he stayed nearby on the edges, he would only walk through the paths that others had crossed, and there would be no meaning to it.

“Thank you for the warning Senior-apprentice Brother Mu. I shall go first then.” Lin Ming cupped his hands together, bowed, and then left alone. The direction that he chose was naturally the world of fire. The more he walked, the faster he went, until he was nearly to the point of flying.

As Mu Dingshan saw Lin Ming disappear into the endless red mist and lava, he sighed. Although Mu Yuhuang had urged over

and over to be safe, she was probably well aware that Lin Ming would journey through thick and thin to explore the deepest parts of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. Otherwise, what point was there in entering the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm?

The blazing hot wind blew in his face as if it were roasting him. The air was filled with the pungent and sour smell of sulfur, and as he looked in the distance, everywhere he saw was covered by a thick red fog. Lin Ming's vision was already reduced to around 1000 feet, but the deeper he continued to go, the more his field of vision would decrease!

After flying at high speed for almost a full day, with Lin Ming's endurance, he simply didn't need to stop and rest. This sort of speed was rare even through all the previous generations of Divine Phoenix Island disciples.

The Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm had no night; the fierce and fiery sun simply didn't move. After an unknown amount of time, Lin Ming suddenly heard a loud rumbling sound coming up from above him. As he looked up, he immediately sucked in a breath. In the sky, there were dozens of rainbow colored beams of light that were crashing down at an alarming rate.

These were shockingly ten feet wide meteorites, or even larger. They were wrapped in burning flames and had long tails of fire. They whistled as they came smashing down onto the ground.

How much power was contained within these meteors? A meteor just a few dozen feet wide might be able to completely level a village with the impact! This was not something that mortal flesh

was able to resist, unless it was a Supreme Elder from the Realm of the Gods.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

As meteorites crashed in the distance, they smashed into the dark red rock or into the giant pools of lava, sparking massive explosions. Lin Ming could see lava shooting hundreds of feet into the sky, or even a thousand feet and more!

The ground trembled and a dreadful shock wave billowed past; it was impossible for someone to stand firmly on the ground here.

Lin Ming maintained complete concentration. The speed of the meteorite shower was simply too quick. Although the area was big, he couldn't outrun the explosion, he could only escape in advance. Fortunately, the shower of meteorites wasn't too dense, and massive meteorites were in the minority.

As Lin Ming stimulated the bodily true essence that protected him to the max, he moved according to the trajectory of the rainbow colored lights he saw. From this, he was able to determine the direction and speed at which the meteorite was falling. At this moment, his eyes widened. He saw a three foot wide smaller meteorite rapidly approaching him, it would crash not too far from where he was!

Golden Roc Shattering the Void instantly erupted. Lin Ming let loose his entire perception to track the path of the meteorite while he galvanized the true essence protecting him to the limit in order

to avoid the full impact of this meteorite.

If the shock wave of the collision hit him from such a close range, the true essence that protected Lin Ming would be torn apart like paper.

Bang!

The meteorite hit the ground, and the resulting explosion was like a deafening thunderclap to Lin Ming's ears, nearly blowing apart his eardrums. He was sent flying by the shockwave, and fell directly into a pool of thick lava.

Fortunately, the azure true essence that protected Lin Ming was endless. Being in this lava for a short period of time was nothing.

As Lin Ming instantly jumped, he saw that the rocks in the ground around him had cracked for hundreds of feet. The lava shot up into the sky, and fire blazed like a soaring inferno, directly piercing through the sky!

This is...

Lin Ming stared with wide eyes. He could clearly feel the active whining of the Heretical God Seed within him as well as the restlessness of the Fire Essence. Suddenly, Lin Ming was enlightened... originally, there wasn't any fire in the giant pool of lava, but after the meteorite struck, it actually formed a massive flame...

Bang! Bang! Bang!

As meteorites crashed down in the distance, the roaring flames reflected in Lin Ming's pupils. It was like he could see the origin of fire...

The origin of fire was it's Law, and also the Concept of Fire.

The collision, movement, and the following terrifying explosion created a massively blazing flame. The more violent the explosion was, the more terrifying the flames would become.

If a high-speed meteorite strike the ground and create such a terrifying fire, then what if it were true essence instead?

If high-speed true essence struck, would it create an even more terrifying fire?

Woosh!

Another meteorite came crashing towards Lin Ming, it was even larger than the last one. Lin Ming flew away with Golden Rock Shattering the Void. However, he didn't go too far. His intention was to be a bit close, so that he could keep his perception in constant contact with the meteorite.

Bang!

The earth seemed to tear apart. The billowing lava and violent destructive shockwave that followed was even more terrifying than the last time and waves of lava were sent surging out. Lin Ming stood within the ensuing storm, and was instantly sent flying backwards.

Lin Ming felt like his internal organs were struck by a hammer and he spat out a mouthful of blood. However, his eyes were filled with joyous ecstasy!

“The Concept of Fire, I’ve touched it!”

Even though he was just severely injured, Lin Ming didn’t care. He summoned his true essence and thrust out with the Purple Comet Spear!

Facing the wave of flame and lava that approached him, the Purple Comet Spear swept through the flames, colliding with the tide of lava.

The essence of the fire and heat was produced through impact... with true essence simulating this, the power of fire could immediately be doubled!

Chapter 395 – Fallen Star Flame

“Hou!”

Under the thrust of the spear, the tide of surging lava was like a tsunami that was split in half!

“Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky!”

A blazing crimson phoenix soared into the skies. This phoenix’s body was actually several times more powerful than the one displayed at the banquet competition! And the flames the flickering on its body were also several times more luminous!

Without a doubt, this was related to breaking through to the peak Pulse Condensation period and also gaining a deeper understanding of the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’. But the greatest factor was that Lin Ming had suddenly touched upon the origin of fire, and had now comprehended the Concept of Fire!

With the Concept of Fire supporting the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’, his move now seemed to contain a soul!

The long spear sliced through the lava, spear light shining through. Lin Ming’s spear skills were becoming increasingly swift and increasingly fierce. With each thrust of his spear, flames howled as they burned. In that moment, the Purple Comet Spear itself seemed to have turned a fiery force of nature, unstoppable!

Lin Ming's mind flashed through the formulas and laws of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle'. Then, his spear potential turned, "10,000 Flames Burning World!"

This was another fire martial skill contained within the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle' that was a level harder than Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky. In order to use it, one would normally need to reach Perfection of the second layer of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle'. But, with the help of the Vermillion Bird blood essence and the Concept of Fire, he was able to use this technique.

"Hou!"

Dozens of true essence flames shot out, piercing through the wall of lava like arrows. The flames split in all directions, incinerating the void!

10,000 Flames Burning World could be used in a large area attack, but it could also be concentrated all onto a single target. It was the strongest move within the second layer of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle'.

As Lin Ming continuously used 10,000 Flames Burning World, at this time, the shower of meteorites began to thin. At the final moment, Lin Ming suddenly felt a terrifying oppressive presence falling down towards his head. As he looked up, he gasped. Far in the sky, there was a giant flaming meteor that was dozens of feet wide, wantonly smashing down. It had dozens of flaming tails that

trailed its presence!

Without regard for anything else, Lin Ming instantly turned around and bolted away. This massive meteor would undoubtedly be able to shatter even a mountain.

The moment that the meteor landed, Lin Ming plunged headfirst into a pool of lava.

Bang!!!

The collision was as if the hand of a god had struck the earth, completely tearing apart the land. Lava everywhere flew thousands of feet into the sky, breaking through the clouds.

Lin Ming hid within the lava while stimulating the azure true essence to protect himself, also releasing his perception to investigate what was happening on the surface. The final meteor had impacted around five or six miles away from Lin Ming, and the intense damage had caused a massive amount of rocks to swell back like a wave, forming a crater in the earth. The lava around it began to flow into this crater.

Lin Ming gasped, and then jumped out from the lava.

If someone were to be hit directly by such a giant meteor, even a Revolving Core elder would perish.

As the last meteor fell, the meteor shower completely stopped.

Unfortunately, even though the last meteor had caused a massive explosion, Lin Ming had to hastily dodge and hadn't been able to release his perception to sense the Concept of Fire.

The fires still raged as before, and the ground was left in a complete mess. The choppy lava boiled up, and scorching waves of heat erupted.

Lin Ming stood on the hot rocks, carefully feeling and grasping what he had just experienced. The faint touch he had of the Concept of Fire was becoming increasingly clear.

“The Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm is truly wonderful. Without being able to witness such a rare and fantastic scene, wanting to touch upon such an ethereal Concept of Fire would be far too difficult!”

Comprehending the Concept of Fire was more difficult than comprehending the Concept of Wind. One needed a fire-attribute physique that had a high fusion compatibility, perception that was higher than others', and also years of practicing with fire origin energy. This was the only way to gain a bit of insight into the Concept of Fire. For instance, the Sunfire Princess was a character on this level.

Concepts were an idea that could not be explained, only personally understood. Lin Ming had relied on simulating the meteorites smashing into the ground with his true essence in order to understand the Concept of Fire. But in truth, this was only a single kind of comprehension of the Concept of Fire. Even if he were to tell others, they wouldn't be able to imagine this, and they

also wouldn't be able to simulate this scene with their true essence. They would most likely blindly attempt and waste their time, ultimately amounting to nothing.

After Lin Ming received his spear, he was about to leave when he had a very strange feeling come over him.

‘Mmm? This is...’

The Heretical God Seed began to restlessly move in agitation. The surrounding fire origin energy trembled. The source of all of this seemed to be from the impact site of that giant meteor.

Lin Ming couldn't help but take a couple of steps towards this peculiar sensation. Suddenly, he heard the wind whistle, and all of the surrounding fire origin energy seemed to be pulled in by some absorbing force, flowing past him and into that giant meteor crater.

The fire origin energy began to speed past him faster and faster. The cries of the Heretical God Seed became increasingly rapid. A moment later, a giant vortex of fire origin energy formed within the meteor crater, crazily absorbing the fire origin energy from a massive radius. A strong wind picked up from this vortex, scraping past Lin Ming's body like a knife across his skin.

“What a horrifying absorbing force!” Lin Ming could even feel the fire origin energy within his own body being hauled towards this force. But, under the pressure of the Heretical God Seed, the fire origin energy was eventually contained within him.

The absorption was becoming increasingly wild. Even the lava ponds began to seethe and boil in excitement, and the giant bubble of lava became increasingly violent, the level of the lava pools rising by a great deal.

Bang!

With a muffled sound, a column of lava burst dozens of feet into the air, and was pulled in by the absorbing force, rushing towards the meteorite crater.

After this first column of lava burst out, more and more columns of lava began to erupt into the sky, all of them flowing into the central crater. The crater was like a whale that greedily absorbed everything. The red rocks on the floor were broken apart by the raging fires, and shattered pieces of stone flew into the air. The entire earth began to collapse as avalanches occurred all over.

Lin Ming was stunned; just what was going on? The Heretical God Seed in his body was screaming in an increasingly urgent manner. He helplessly watched as lava filled the giant crater that was produced by the meteor collision, and then even began overflowing past the high ridges. In the heart of the lava lake, a deep blazing crimson light shot into the sky. This blazing crimson light was only a foot thick, but was like a divine sword that stabbed the vault of heaven.

This shining crimson light began to slowly coalesce into a fist-sized object. Within this red light, Lin Ming felt a terrifyingly rich

and pure fire origin energy.

This... this... this was...

Flame Essence!?

Lin Ming's mind shook, was he witnessing the birth of a Flame Essence?

The flames of the world had spirit. In some strange and dangerous lands with an incomparably rich fire origin energy, it was possible that a Fire Essence would be born. The requirements for a Flame Essence to be born were extremely harsh; it was similar to the qualifications a martial artist needed in order to become an Emperor level powerhouse. Not only did there need to be an exceedingly rich fire origin energy, but it also required the hand of destiny.

The birth of a Flame Essence often required many different coincidences to coincide together into an accidental result; this was simply impossible to duplicate.

In many cases, lands where special types of fire had existed for thousands of years would be unable to give birth to a Flame Essence.

Witnessing the creation of a Flame Essence was thousands of times more difficult than finding a Flame Essence!

Thus, as Lin Ming watched this Flame Essence continuously grow with wide eyes, he was beyond shocked.

This was the Fallen Star Flame, a Flame Essence that was born from the combustion of a meteor. The amount of this type of Flame Essence that existed in the world was rare to the point of sending those who searched for it into despair; it was nearly a unique existence in the Sky Spill Continent.

The Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm originally contained an incomparably rich fire origin energy. As the lava surged for countless years, undoubtedly many types of Flame Essences had been born. And in this place, a Flame Essence was already being formed. But, it was far from completion.

And then a miracle had happened. The massive meteor had smashed the ground, and terrifyingly high temperatures had skyrocketed along with a fervid impact, becoming the primer to manifest the gathering of the power of fire.

However, the original Flame Essence that was brewing here was still unable to form. As the Fallen Star Flame absorbed the fire origin energy that had gathered here for tens of thousands of years, a new Flame Essence was born!

The Flame Essence that was being born had actually become the nutrition of the Fallen Star Flame. In turn, the Fallen Star Flame's grade had climbed to an even higher level.

Lin Ming was short of breath. Just what grade was this Fallen

Star Flame?

Lin Ming took out his Purple Comet Spear. He tread his feet, flying forwards until he reached where the Fallen Star Flame was. The speed at which he flew was very slow; he was being vigilant of any and all dangers.

“The energy of the flame is increasing, it’s already at the medium-grade earth-step level!” Lin Ming’s eyebrows shot up. A medium-grade earth-step Flame Essence would be intelligent. Combined with its extremely fiery power of fire, he didn’t know whether or not he would be able to deal with it.

Lin Ming approached a foot at a time. When he was only 200 feet away from the Fallen Star Flame, a sudden change occurred!

The Fallen Star Flame violently trembled, and suddenly the lava pool exploded. A thin column of lava shot towards Lin Ming’s chest like an arrow.

“It’s quite intelligent, it even knows to attack me!”

Lin Ming drew back, circulating the true essence in his body. The Purple Comet Spear slashed down, and the thin column of lava was dispersed. However, the lava pool growled again, and dozens of the small magma columns shot up, striking towards Lin Ming like a fiery python. Lin Ming calmly wielded the Purple Comet Spear in his hand and thrust out at each lava column. Every spear strike contained the Concept of Fire, and the columns of lava broke one after another!

Lin Ming launched Golden Roc Shattering the Void and gradually moved forwards, slowly approaching the Fallen Star Flame.

When he was once again 200 feet away, this time, another change occurred!

The Fallen Star Flame suddenly issued a sharp wailing scream that caused one's scalp to tingle! The vortex of origin energy suddenly began to violently move, the absorbing power increasing. The ground was crushed, and huge holes appeared. Large chunks off rocks flew into the air until there were hundreds, then thousands, all shooting towards the Fallen Star Flame.

Ka ka ka ka –

The pieces of rocks constantly fell onto the Fallen Star Flame. Because the speed of the rocks was so fast, a whistling sound rang in the air.

The fire of the Fallen Star Flame was extremely hot and savage. All of the rocks that touched it were instantly refined, turning all of the impurities into black smoke with only the purest essence left behind. This rock essence constantly gathered and compressed until it completely wrapped the Fallen Star Flame. The volume continued to increase.

Gradually, it unexpectedly cemented into a rock beast. Its body was 100 feet long and 50 to 60 feet tall. It was a deep crimson red all over, and had the appearance of a leopard.

Lin Ming sucked in a breath. What was this?

Roar!

The crimson rock leopard let loose an earth-shattering roar, and the ground trembled beneath Lin Ming's feet.

Chapter 396 – Subdue

The higher grade a Flame Essence was, the more intelligent it would be. Some high grade Flame Essences could even use attribute skills. This Fallen Star Flame had probably used such a skill.

The crimson leopard roared and rushed towards Lin Ming. Lin Ming wanted to swallow the Fallen Star Flame, but the Fallen Star Flame also sensed the rich and pure fire origin energy within Lin Ming's body and wanted to eat him to evolve.

As this 100 foot tall and several dozen thousand jin heavy rock beast ran, the entire ground shook and lava shot out. Lin Ming held his spear flat in front of him, revolving the true essence in his body to the limit.

As the fiery rock beast was about to lunge at him, Lin Ming's pupils contracted and he thrust out his spear.

Ka!

The Purple Comet Spear pierced through the fiery rock monster's chest, but the powerful impact had caused the Purple Comet Spear to bend like a crescent moon.

Lin Ming used his waist and pushed forwards. The true essence that was hidden with his bone marrow completely exploded, and his strength instantly reached a terrifying degree. He forcefully picked up the giant rock monster!

“Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky!”

Bang!

A flaming phoenix soared into the sky, striking the stomach of the fiery rock beast and violently detonating.

“Mm? No damage!?”

With a single Phoenix Wings Ascending Sky, it had managed to create some cracks within the belly of the fiery rock beast. But compared to its giant body, it was simply negligible damage.

“Hou!” As the fiery rock beast landed, it opened its mouth and spat out a giant purple fireball. Lin Ming was too close and wasn’t able to dodge it in time. Instead, he flourished the Purple Comet Spear and struck the fireball.

The fireball blew up, and the purple flames landed on Lin Ming’s body before sputtering out. The true essence that surrounded Lin Ming’s body made ‘chi chi chi’ sounds as it was melted away. Lin Ming’s blood tumbled; the power of fire in that attack was like a serpent that snuck into his body where it rampaged along his meridians. Finally the Heretical God Seed shook, and used its suppressive power to restrain the power of fire.

“This purple fire can actually corrode the true essence that protects my body?” Lin Ming’s heart went cold. This monster was

truly tricky to deal with. Not only was it immune to fire based attacks, but the purple flame attacks it sent out were extremely fierce. If a normal Divine Phoenix Island disciple had run into this spook fellow, they would have been unable to deal with a single attack.

The Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm was a world of fire and ice. To the Divine Phoenix Island disciples that specialized in the fire and ice elements, there were lucky opportunities to be found everywhere. However, even if one came across a lucky chance, wanting to take hold of it wasn't an easy matter.

For instance, the Flame Essence would rebel to protect itself, and fire-attribute or ice-attribute valuable materials had powerful vicious beasts protecting them. If one wished to comprehend Concepts, they would also have to place themselves in danger. However, if one wasn't lucky, it would be extremely easy to die.

“Roar!”

The fiery rock beast opened its gaping jaws and took a deep breath. All of the nearby fire origin energy nearby began to rapidly gather, forming a vortex of energy.

Lin Ming's eyes widened. Without hesitation, he activated Golden Roc Shattering the Void and threw himself to the side.

Bang!

A purple beam of intense fire shot out from the fiery rock beast's mouth, striking the lava pool that had been behind Lin Ming. Plumes of lava soared hundreds of feet into the sky.

After the strike missed, the fiery rock monster suddenly sped towards Lin Ming. Although it had a massive body, its speed was extremely quick, and every step it took was like a clap of thunder.

At this time, Lin Ming had flown in the air. His figure paused for a moment as he connected true essence to the Heretical God Seed. The Thunder Soul howled!

At the moment that the fiery rock monster lunged at Lin Ming, he became like a feather that was blown back by the wind. As he flew backwards, he opened his hand and a three inch long steel needle appeared, shooting out like a flash of electric light. Its target was the fiery rock beast's left eye!

Pah!

The Divine Demon Steel Needle pierced into the fiery rock beast's eye and then exited from the other side!

Rock exploded and and purple red blood sprayed out. As Lin Ming took a closer look, that blood was actually thick magma.

To use fire rocks as meat, magma as blood, and a Fire Essence as its heart; such a vicious beast caused Lin Ming to be amazed in acclaim.

However, it had just taken form and still hadn't absorbed enough fire origin energy. Thus, its strength was reduced by a great deal.

As its left eye was ruined, the fiery rock monster let out a painful and angry roar. It aimed towards Lin Ming and spat out several purple fireballs.

However, each one of these fireballs was dodged by Lin Ming. With a flick of his fingers, the Divine Demon Steel Needle roared out and pierced through the fiery rock monster's right eye.

“Awoo-!”

The fiery rock monster issued a pitiful cry. Lin Ming saw an opportunity and shot forwards like an arrow; the Purple Comet Spear in his hand thrust straight towards the fiery rock monster's gaping mouth.

The power of thunder and fire intersected; Thunderfire Annihilation!

Bang!

Thunderfire Annihilation exploded within the center of the fiery rock monster's mouth. For a period, crushed rock and magma scattered in all directions, filling the sky. From the front of the fiery rock monster, half of its body had been exploded into bits. Lin Ming's concentrated his true essence into protecting his body and

resisting the shattered rocks and magma that struck him. At the same time, he released his perception, accurately sifting through the tens of thousands of fragments until he found the true body of the Fallen Star Flame.

“There it is!”

Lin Ming saw that around 100 feet away, there was a palm-sized ball of purple flame; it had a very glum expression.

Lin Ming waved his sleeve and his body was like a fish as it passed through the 100 feet distance, immediately grabbing the Fallen Star Flame.

The Fallen Star Flame instinctively felt a deep and abiding fear, wanting to escape. But it had suffered a great blow a moment ago, so it was impossible for it to escape Lin Ming’s grasp.

As Lin Ming held onto the Fallen Star Flame, the azure true essence he surrounded his hand with began to issue ‘chi chi chi’ sounds. In an instant, a hole had burned through the azure true essence that protected his body.

“This Fallen Star Flame has such a strong corrosive strength!”

There were many special Flame Essences and Thunder Souls that were born in special conditions and locations, thus obtaining different properties. For instance, the Blood Extinguishing Demon Thunder was born in desolate lands that were filled with blood and

death, so it had have bloodthirsty characteristics. As for this Fallen Star Flame, it actually had corrosive properties.

Because of the extreme rarity of the Fallen Star Flame, the ancient texts only contained a vague and cursory mention of it. There hadn't been a description of just what sort of properties it had.

Lin Ming first drew up a few dozen azure runes, letting them all fall onto the Fallen Star Flame. This was the technique to seal a Flame Essence.

Chi chi chi!

Every rune that touched the Fallen Star Flame was corroded into ashes. Lin Ming remained unperturbed, his fingers moving faster and faster until they were just shadows.

As the number of symbol runes continuously increased, the Fallen Star Flame fiercely struggled. Many runes were destroyed, but there were a number of runes that managed to stick onto the Fallen Star Flame. Finally, the layer of runes became thicker and thicker and the light of the Fallen Star Flame became increasingly dim, until it was completely sealed.

Lin Ming let out a long breath. He locked his fingers together and released winding threads of true essence that wound around the Fallen Star Flame, eventually forming a cocoon around it.

Success.

Lin Ming took out a special jade box and placed the true essence cocoon within, and then placed it into his spatial ring. Now was not a good time to absorb the Fallen Star Flame. After all, it was still a medium-grade earth-step Flame Essence. With Lin Ming's current strength, he would just barely be able to absorb it. Not only that, but there were boundless dangers within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm and there was no one here to stand guard over him. If anything went awry at all, he would most likely die.

Chapter 397 – Ancient Phoenix Main Hall

The environment within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm was incomparably complex and convoluted. The lucky chances here had accumulated for 100,000 years, or even several hundred thousand years.

Because the fire origin energy within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm was incomparably pure and rich, it was extremely easy for all sorts of fire-attribute materials and treasures to develop here, including even Flame Essences.

Within the Sky Spill Continent, there was an extremely low number of Flame Essences, each one of these Flame Essence was exceedingly rare. But within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, there was comparatively many of them. However, it was a pity that there were too many limitations on entering the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. The time limit was only a few days, and even then, if one wished to find a Flame Essence, they would need extremely good luck.

After Lin Ming obtained the Fallen Star Flame, for the following two days he only found a common stalk of Flame Grass within a pool of lava. Besides that, he had found nothing else.

As the third day ended, that would also be the last day to explore the wide open land of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.

The sun began to fall close to the ground, and then it rose again. Afterwards, at the end of Lin Ming's sight, a fire-red palace

appeared. The palace waved in his eyes, as if it were a mirage in a desert.

“This is the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall.”

Lin Ming narrowed his eyes and traced a jade tablet within his spatial ring. This was the key to entering the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall. There was a total of 16 jade tablets. If one didn't have this jade tablet, then as the 16 people entered the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, they would be sent out of the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, thus ending their trial.

At the same time, within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, Mu Dingshan, Mu Xiaoqing, and the rest of the 16 individuals all saw the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall appear in front of them. These past three days, they each had their own harvests. Mu Dingshan had found a very precious fire-attribute ore. He also found a valuable material that could be used to increase the fire-attribute true essence within one's body. As for Mu Xiaoqing, she had obtained a Snow Lotus Ice Blossom after subduing an ice-attribute spirit beast.

However, these were all inferior to the precious Fallen Star Flame that Lin Ming had obtained. Not only was Lin Ming's destiny greater, but even if Mu Dingshan had come across this medium-grade earth-step Flame Essence, he wouldn't have had the strength to deal with it; the only route he would have been able to take was a hasty escape.

In similar situations of luck, the ability one had corresponded to how much of an advantage they could grasp from their lucky

chances.

Lin Ming looked in the direction of the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, activated his movement technique, and then flew towards it.

The people had a saying that one would run their horse dead before reaching the mountain in sight. Lin Ming thought that the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall was only a palace, and it would take about an incense stick of time to reach. However, he hadn't expected that all his ideas were incorrect; it had taken him nearly two hours to reach the palace!

As he approached the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, Lin Ming gasped. This was just too big, way too big. Big to the point of horrifying him! No wonder it had seemed so close when it had been so far away!

The towering walls of the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall reached the skies, and were completely made of dark crimson rock; they were no less than 1000 feet high. Above that, there was a massive circular phoenix totem image that was no less than 200-300 feet in diameter.

Every column of the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall would take at least a dozen people holding their arms to fully encircle it. On these columns were all sorts of pictures. There were Saint Beasts, God Beasts, masters of mankind, all sorts of treasures, pills, valuable materials, and mounts. Among the columns, there were even those with large groups of nefarious looking demons. They grasped large axes or scythes, and their entire bodies were entwined in thick chains, the muscles of their bodies bulging like

dragons under their skin.

As Lin Ming saw these depictions on the columns, his pupils shrank. He had seen this race of beings before. After swallowing the Shattered Demon Heart Crystal, he had seen the Netherworld Great Emperor take his great axe and slaughter a nearly endless amount of demons. After he killed one, he would always drink their blood.

The demons that the Netherworld Great Emperor massacred were entirely alike with the reliefs depicted on these columns.

However, the ones that the Netherworld Great Emperor massacred were apparently nothing but small fries. The ones depicted on the columns were all supreme experts. The mounts they rode were Flood Dragons, Hornless Dragons, and other such Saint Beasts. These demons on the columns should at least be Revolving Core realm masters, and even many extreme Revolving Core masters and almighty Peerless Emperors.

As he looked from a broader perspective, there were hundreds – if not thousands of these demons engraved onto the columns. Lin Ming was shocked. These hundreds and thousands of great masters also had hundreds and thousands of Saint Beasts. Not even a Holy Land of the Sky Spill Continent would have power on such a massive scale!

If these reliefs weren't exaggerations, then it could only be said that the world of the past era that the Ancient Phoenix Clan once lived in was many times more terrifying than the present!

Lin Ming sighed. It seemed that the present Sky Spill Continent, in terms of the quality and quantity of its powerhouses, was much lower than that of the past.

“Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, you’ve arrived here so quickly!”

As Lin Ming was gazing at the reliefs, he suddenly heard an affable and hearty voice from behind him. Lin Ming turned to see Mu Dingshan enter the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall. Mu Dingshan had a very worn out expression that was covered with dust, and his clothes were torn or charred in several places. Even his hair was scorched. It seemed that in these past three days, he had experienced a great deal of trials.

As Mu Dingshan saw Lin Ming look at him, he smiled and brightly laughed, “Junior-apprentice Brother, please don’t laugh at me. My luck has been quite good. I found a Flameheart Flower that could be used to enhance one’s fire-attribute true essence. However, it was guarded by a nearly sixth-level Fire Python. My strength is limited, so I was barely able to wound Fire Python and then take the Flameheart Flower. However, I was also heavily injured in the process.”

Mu Dingshan smiled with a self-deprecating expression. At this time, Mu Xiaoqing and the other direct disciples arrived one after another. Whether they were from the Vermillion Bird Faction or the Blue Luan Faction, they all eventually came to the same Ancient Phoenix Main Hall.

The 16 disciples all arrived together, not a single one of them had died. This was good news indeed!

The 16 disciples had all received some wounds, but all of their faces were filled with excitement and passion. Especially the third ranked direct disciple Sun Yu – he was finding it hard to conceal the happy pride on his face.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Sun, it seems that you had a very great lucky chance during this time in the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm? What did you get? Why are you so happy?” A cheerful looking youth asked. He was the eighth ranked direct disciple, Zhang Yan.

After they entered the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, they still had around an hour to rest. During this time, it was inevitable that they would discuss whatever harvests they managed to obtain during their jaunt into the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.

Sun Yu smiled, and then took out the treasure he had obtained in the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm. As disciples from the same sect that had friendly relations, there weren't many taboo subjects between them. Not only that, but after exiting the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, they also had to register whatever they found. There were some things that even the sect would bid for.

Sun Yu took out an exquisite jade box and carefully opened it. A dim, hazy red light suddenly shot into the sky, causing all of the surrounding disciples to exclaim in awe.

“If I’m not wrong, that’s Sunfire Jade!”

“That’s right! I’ve seen one from my master before, you’re definitely not wrong!”

Within the delicate jade box, there was a small red jade the size of a longan. The surrounding fire origin energy continuously gathered onto the small red jade, creating a small vortex.

“It’s really Sunfire Jade! Junior-apprentice Brother Sun, your luck is awesome!” Even Mu Dingshan was moved. In comparison, even what he had obtained was lacking.

“Haha, I just have good luck. I’m sure that everyone’s harvest is not much worse than mine.” Although Sun Yi spoke modestly, his eyes were shining with excitement and pride that he couldn’t suppress, and his body was shaking in giddy joy.

This Sunfire Jade could not be refined nor could it be taken to increase one’s own strength. But as long as one wore it on their body somewhere, they could increase the amount of fire origin energy that gathered around them. Thus, they could speed up their cultivation speed to a certain extent. In battle, it would also increase a martial artist’s recovery capability; this was truly a rare treasure.

After being stimulated by the appearance of the Sunfire Jade, the other disciples began to take out the treasures they had obtained. The ones that had greater harvests naturally showed off more. As for the ones with smaller harvests, they could only sigh and watch

on in envy and longing. There were even two disciples that looked sad and dejected, not bothering to even speak. They had searched everywhere that was in their capabilities for the last three days, but hadn't managed to find anything.

Many disciples believed that if they didn't find anything within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, then that would signify that their destiny was poor; this was not an auspicious sign.

Even the quiet and low-key Mu Xiaoqing showed off her harvest. Although the Snow Lotus Ice Blossom was valuable, it was still far from being able to compare with Sun Yu's Sunfire Jade. Sun Yu couldn't hide his smile, feeling sublime in his heart. Although Mu Dingshan and Mu Xiaoqing were stronger than him, they hadn't obtained a better treasure than him. This meant that he had the greater destiny.

After Mu Xiaoqing finished showing off what she had found, Sun Yu turned to Lin Ming, who was staring at the reliefs on the columns. He said, "Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, what did you obtain in the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm? Let us have a look!"

"Oh?" Lin Ming turned his head. He said, "My luck was good. I managed to obtain a Flame Essence."

"Flame Essence?"

Everyone was immediately interested. Something like a Flame Essence would sell for a great price, even if it was a low-grade human-step one.

“Junior-apprentice Brother Lin has such great luck.”

“Even the most basic of Flame Essences are worth many true essence stones. Junior-apprentice Brother Lin’s luck is too amazing.”

“As expected of our Junior-brother Lin.” Sun Yu also complimented, smiling as he continued, “Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, what level of Flame Essence is it? Take it out so we can have a look.”

“Yes, yes, let us take a look!” The many disciples were very eagerly waiting to see, even Mu Dingshan was looking expectant.

Lin Ming didn’t bother hiding anything. He immediately withdrew the jade box from his spatial ring and took out the cocoon that was formed from azure true essence. As he undid some of the true essence threads, he revealed the tightly sealed Fallen Star Flame.

This purple flame, although sealed, still released an aura that made one’s heart race. As soon as the azure true essence that contained it was undone, the Fallen Star Flame once again made a racket as it was exposed to the world, struggling and roaring like a small leopard. The symbol runes that bound it released ‘chi chi chi’ sounds as they were unexpectedly being constantly corroded by the Fallen Star Flame.

At the same time, the surrounding fire origin energy instantly

became restless, howling as it flew towards the Fallen Star Flame and formed a giant fire origin energy vortex from thin air. This vortex was countless times more formidable than the one that had been produced by the Sunfire Jade.

Mu Dingshan's complexion immediately changed. He could clearly feel the fire origin energy with his own body being pulled, as if it wanted to break free from his body.

Sun Yu also stared with wide eyes, his expression full of shock and disbelief. After he repeatedly confirmed the truth in front of him, he finally realized an incredible fact.

“Medium-grade earth-step Flame Essence!”

“Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, you managed to subdue a medium-grade earth-step Flame Essence!?”

Mu Dingshan and Sun Yu nearly spoke at the same time. As their voices fell, the other disciples that didn't understand what level of Flame Essence this was were immediately bewildered, their eyes widening and their hearts shaking.

Medium-grade earth-step Flame Essence?

This sort of Flame Essence could kill someone. If they encountered it, it would already be a good result if they didn't die. But Lin Ming was actually able to subdue it?

Chapter 398 – Bloodline Test

In order to subjugate and obtain a medium-grade earth-step Flame Essence within the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, it wasn't only a question of one's destiny – one also needed sufficient strength! As Mu Dingshan thought back to half a month ago when he had witnessed a battle between two Kings of the younger generation, he could only sigh with emotion. “Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, good thing it was you. If I were the one that encountered this Flame Essence, I would be lucky to even escape with all my limbs intact.”

In fact, the last time that Mu Dingshan had entered into the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, he had also come across a great lucky chance. Within the center of a lava pool, he had seen a Rainbow Blaze Fruit growing there. This kind of miracle medicine was able to extend the life of a fire-attribute martial artist!

Although it had a limited effect on one's cultivation, if the news that he had managed to obtain it was spread to the old Revolving Core monsters or even the Emperor level powerhouses, then they would most likely desperately bid for it. When that happened, Mu Dingshan could just open his mouth and request any treasures he wanted, from high-grade Flame Essences to top medicines.

Unfortunately, this Rainbow Blaze Fruit had been guarded by a top sixth-level vicious beast. Mu Dingshan had instantly turned tail and ran away. Luckily, he had quickly and decisively run away. Otherwise, if that vicious beast had caught scent of him, he would certainly have died there.

Although he regretted it, he realized it was the only path he could take. With his strength, Mu Dingshan simply wasn't able to attain a treasure like that.

“This is a Fallen Flame Star?” Mu Dingshan had a wide breadth of experience and recalled the name of this Flame Essence.

“Mm, yes.” Lin Ming nodded.

“The Fallen Star Flame is rare even within the entire Sky Spill Continent. That Junior-apprentice Brother Lin can obtain one means that you have tremendous luck!” Mu Dingshan praised. He wasn't clear that this Fallen Star Flame had already mutated. When the meteor had crashed down in a terrifying explosion, it had caused the Fallen Star Flame to absorb the Flame Essence that was forming in the lava pool, creating an unknown chance. A Fallen Star Flame was originally extremely rare. As for this mutated Fallen Star Flame, it was simply a singularly unique existence in the world.

Hearing the name of the Fallen Star Flame, the surrounding disciples also began to sigh in admiration. As they spoke, the envy in their voices was thick.

Absorbing a Flame Essence could not only increase one's combat strength, but also enhance their cultivation. With Lin Ming's strength and talent, it probably wouldn't be long before he was able to absorb this Flame Essence. When that happened, his cultivation might make another breakthrough. At that time, who else could be Lin Ming's match?

“Alright. We have less than an hour before the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall opens. At that time, 16 jade platforms will appear. Every person can select any platform they wish to enter to Ancient Phoenix Main Hall. I hope that all of you will take advantage of the time available to rest up, and adjust to your best condition by the time the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall opens. I do not want any of you to die here, this is also the mission personally given to be by the Honorable Sect Master!”

Mu Dingshan repeated his warning, his voice serious and humorless. When they were travelling the world of the Ancient Phoenix Mystic Realm, if any of the lower ranked core disciples had died, it wouldn't mean much. However, if any of the current 16 direct disciples were to die, it would be a great loss to Divine Phoenix Island. After they entered the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, Mu Dingshan wouldn't be able to protect any of them. So he could only repeatedly urge them to stay safe.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Mu, what will happen in the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall?” A youth asked. This was the first time he had entered the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, and also the first time he had entered the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm.

“Everyone who enters the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall will have different encounters. The Ancient Phoenix Main Hall is a trial that the Ancient Phoenix Clan used to test the experience and talent of their juniors. When the time comes, you will all be separated based on your talent and bloodline, and then sent to a smelting trial with a corresponding difficulty. Within the smelting trial, there is a chance that you can die. If anything happens, do not try to be brave. If you need to give up, then give up.”

As Mu Dingshan spoke, he deliberately glanced over at Lin Ming. “Junior-apprentice Brother Lin, please do not be overly confident in your abilities and try to show off. Honorable Sect Master has bid me to mention this to you again and again. Her Highness the Saintess also has very high hopes for you. If anything happens to you at all, I will not have the face to return.”

Although Lin Ming was truly strong, the difficulty of the smelting trial depended on one’s talent. When that happened, strength was useless.

In terms of bloodline talent, Lin Ming was a bit worse. Although he had absorbed the Vermillion Bird blood essence, it was still far worse than Mu Qianyu or Mu Bingyun.

“Senior-apprentice Brother Mu, please rest assured, I will definitely return safely.” In the past one to two years, Lin Ming had experienced countless dangerous life or death situations. Compared to all of that, the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall was comparatively safe.

“That’s right. Senior-apprentice Brother Mu, do you understand the reasons behind the murals and reliefs in the Main Hall?” Lin Ming pointed to the walls and columns. He had a strange nagging feeling that these depictions were a record of earth-shattering events that had happened in ancient times.

“Oh, you’re curious about these... the last time I came here, I also saw them. I went back and asked Honorable Sect Master what they

were, but Honorably Sect Master only said that they were scenes from ancient times. As for who these images specifically depict, Honorable Sect Master wouldn't know even if they were people from the Sky Spill Continent. We can only vaguely speculate on possibilities.”

Mu Dingshan's answer wasn't too far from Lin Ming's expectations. The Ancient Phoenix Main Hall had already existed for countless tens or hundreds of thousands of years. But, Divine Phoenix Island only had a history of a mere 3000 years. Naturally, Divine Phoenix Island wouldn't be clear as to what these images that were depicted meant.

The passage of time was simply too long. The Realm of the Gods may have existed for hundreds of millions of years. As for the Sky Spill Continent, he had no idea how long it had existed for. The ancient texts only recorded history that went back a few tens of thousands of years. Everything before that had already been destroyed or lost to the vast and endless flow of time, and was unable to be found again. Perhaps the martial world of Sky Spill Continent had already been destroyed and reborn several times.

Lin Ming shook his head, no longer thinking about these matters. If he wanted to further explore these things, he would have to wait until he obtained the strength to do so. Perhaps those majestic Holy Lands with deep legacies might have records concerning this.

“Alright everyone, let's get started and meditate. If you are lacking pills, just tell me.” Mu Dingshan said to everyone.

Before entering the Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm, everyone had

come fully stocked with pills. But, one couldn't rule out the possibility that someone had run into danger multiple times and had taken all their pills.

The 16 individuals sat down and began to meditate together. Lin Ming hadn't consumed too much energy, but he still entered the ethereal martial intent state. Entering the deep ethereal state and absorbing the surrounding origin energy to make up for whatever energy he used would be the best way to restore his top condition.

Time passed. Suddenly, the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall's floor began to slightly tremble. Lin Ming opened his eyes; it was finally time to enter the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall!

Ka ka ka!

With the sound of a gears slowly turning, the ground in the center of the Main Hall began to lift, and a large altar dozens of feet wide appeared. On the outer ring of the altar, sparkling, crystal clear jade platforms appeared. There was a total of 16.

“Good. Everyone come up and choose any jade platform.” As Mu Dingshan spoke, he stepped onto the altar, selected a jade platform, and then stood in front.

Lin Ming followed. Each of the 16 jade platforms had the same shape, but there were also subtle differences. Every jade platform had different patterns carved into it; there seemed to be mysterious array symbols that were etched onto the surface of the jade platforms. On the jade platform, there was a groove – its shape

just happened to match the key he had been given to enter the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall.

Lin Ming casually took the jade tablet out from his spatial ring.

“Place a drop of blood onto the jade tablet, and then place the jade tablet into the groove. Then, the smelting trial will open. Every smelting trial will be different. Everyone, this is where we part from now. I hope that seven days from now, I will be able to see the safe return of everyone here!”

As Mu Dingshan spoke, he cut his finger and let his blood drip onto the jade tablet. The jade tablet turned a dazzling blood red, and then Mu Dingshan placed it into the jade platform’s groove. With a flash of crimson light, Mu Dingshan instantly vanished.

The altar began to flash with sparks of light. The Vermillion Bird Faction disciples were covered with a deep crimson red, and the Blue Luan Faction disciples were covered with a light blue. Suddenly, there were only a few of the 16 disciples left.

Lin Ming put a drop of blood on the jade tablet and then inserted it into the groove. In the next moment, he felt a warm light envelop him, and the space around him seem to twist. After several breaths of time, he was warped to a fully enclosed chamber.

Lin Ming could vaguely make out his surroundings in the dark chamber. The chamber was only 100 feet wide and long, and the walls were engraved with different sorts of reliefs, just like the columns and walls he had seen before. There were all sorts of Saint

Beats, humans, and demons...

Some seemed to be celebrating festivals, some seemed to be waging war.

Hu!

A flame lit in the dark void within the chamber, and the fire origin energy of the room began to gather towards the flame, forming numerous radiant red dots. A moment later, these spots warped into human shape, and then began to substantialize into a red person. Its appearance was a bit fuzzy, and its build was about the same as Lin Ming. Its cultivation was at the peak Pulse Condensation period, and it held a spear in its hands.

Sou!

The red figure stabbed out a spear at Lin Ming.

“Is this the beginning of the test?”

Lin Ming raised his spear and calmly counterattacked. Although this red figure’s cultivation was the same as his, its strength was far worse.

Swiping away the red figure’s thrust, Lin Ming pierced his spear through its chest.

Peng!

The scarlet person dissipated into countless red lights. But after several more breaths of time, these points of lights once again gathered together and condensed into a red figure. Its appearance was still fuzzy and it still wielded a spear, but its cultivation was at a half-step Houtian.

A spear thrust forth!

“Too weak.”

Lin Ming acted without hesitation, not bothering to change his style. The Purple Comet Spear thrust forth like before, and punctured the red figures chest.

Peng!

The second red figure fell over and dissipated once again. In the next moment, another red figure appeared. Its appearance, build, and weapon were still the same, but not its cultivation. It had risen by another level – it was at the early Houtian realm.

“Testing my limit?” The corners of Lin Ming’s lips curved up in a grin. If these red human figures became stronger every time they were defeated, then next time it would be at the middle Houtian realm. These red martial artists were probably comparable to the level of someone like Zhang Yanzhao or Huan Xiaodie in terms of talent. They were weaker than Qin Wuxin and Jiang Lanjian. As

for comparing to Lin Ming, the disparity was even greater.

Slightly raising the true essence in his attack, Lin Ming thrust out like before, eliminating his opponent!

.....

At this time, in 15 other chambers, all of them were participating in the same test. Mu Dingshan expended a great deal of effort and finally cut apart a peak Houtian realm martial artist. But in the next moment, the scattered red light once again converged into a red figure. This time, it was a half-step Xiantian martial artist.

Mu Dingshan ruefully smiled. His cultivation was only at the peak of the early Houtian realm. As for the red figure, its talent was comparable to a third-grade sect's direct disciple. If they were on the same level, then Mu Dingshan would naturally be able to easily deal with such an opponent. But now, his opponent had jumped stages yet again; it was at the point where he couldn't handle it any longer.

Against a third-grade sect's direct disciple with a half-step Xiantian cultivation, Mu Dingshan was more likely to lose than win.

Mu Dingshan's result was considered fairly good. Of the 15 other disciples, the majority of them had already been defeated. They could challenge a late Houtian realm martial artist, but not one at the peak Houtian realm.

After they were defeated, these martial artists were all transferred to their smelting trial path, where they would begin their smelting trial.

Chapter 399 – Realm of the Gods' Language

Mu Dingshan was finally defeated by the half-step Xiantian red person. After doing his best and cutting off the red person's arm, he was defeated by its sword.

However, what shocked Mu Dingshan was that after he cut off the red person's arm, the section of the arm that was cut off burst into red lights. Some of the red lights scattered away, and some of them flowed into his body, numbing him. Not only did his injuries heal, but the true essence in his body became increasingly pure.

“This is...”

Mu Dingshan was astonished. The last time he had entered the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, he hadn't experienced such a scene. “Is it possible that if I jump realms to a certain degree, I can obtain benefits?”

The Ancient Phoenix Main Hall was a smelting trial that was created for the younger generations of the Ancient Phoenix Clan, so that they could enhance their strength through these tribulations. It wasn't strange that a situation like this would occur.

As Mu Dingshan became aware of this, he felt a bit of regret. Unfortunately, cutting off that red person's arm was his limit. Although he had obtained a pure fire-attribute origin energy, the amount was too little. It was not enough for him to break through to the middle Houtian realm.

This benefit was something that he could only see, but not obtain.

At this time, Mu Dingshan heard some icy sounds resound within the chamber, as if it were some sort of language. But Mu Dingshan didn't know what was being said. A moment later, a red light flashed and Mu Dingshan was sent out of the chamber to begin the smelting trial that corresponded with his talent.

.....

At this time, within Lin Ming's chamber, he was facing a peak Houtian martial artist.

This red person was equal to a talent like Huan Xiaodie if she were a peak Houtian master. In truth, this wasn't weak; it was already better than a half-step Xiantian Qin Ziya.

Lin Ming's Purple Comet Spear glared with the blinding light of thunderfire. Each time he defeated an opponent, he would conserve as much true essence as possible. He would use the most ordinary move, and absolutely no martial skills. He would defeat them in one move, and not waste another. This was because he didn't know how many more opponents he had to face every time he defeated another red person.

The red person's spear was a spear, but it also understood martial skills. It thrust out its spear, and the fire that wrapped around it manifested into the phantom of a phoenix.

Lin Ming moved, Golden Roc Shattering the Void erupting as he instantly came up behind the red person, the Purple Comet Spear shooting out. Avoiding a collision with the enemy and bypassing its attacks was the best way to save true essence.

This peak Houtian red person was quite strong. It felt Lin Ming's spear behind it and turned around to block it.

However, relative to Lin Ming, the red person was far too weak. Especially after Lin Ming had broken through to the peak Pulse Condensation period. Now his strength had even surpassed Lei Mubai by a level.

Azure true essence erupted. Lin Ming thrust his long spear towards the red person, and the spear stabbed through its dantian. Lin Ming twisted the spear, and tore its dantian to pieces.

The red person exploded into shining red lights again. But what surprised Lin Ming was that after some time, a part of these red lights began to flow into Lin Ming's body.

This was an extremely pure fire origin energy. After it surged into Lin Ming, he felt his entire body pleasantly warm up, as if the true essence in him was speeding up.

“This is...”

Lin Ming felt the red light flowing within him, and discovered

that it was circulating through his meridians before gathering into his dantian and settling there.

“Dantian!” Lin Ming was shocked, and then overjoyed. The difference between the Pulse Condensation period and the Houtian realm was that a Houtian realm master could save and condense true essence in his dantian. But, a Pulse Condensation period martial artist could only contain true essence within their meridians. Naturally, the dantian could hold a much greater amount of true essence than the meridians.

Only a very small amount of true essence flowed into Lin Ming’s dantian. However, this small amount was still proof that he was taking great steps towards reaching the Houtian realm!

“There’s too little true essence, there isn’t much increase in my cultivation. But it still opened up the path leading from my meridians to my dantian. Later, when I step into the Houtian realm from the Pulse Condensation period, there won’t be any barriers, and it will be completely successful. This Ancient Phoenix Main Hall is truly wonderful!”

As Lin Ming was thinking, the red lights in front of him began to condense again. This time, another red person holding a spear appeared, but their cultivation was at a half-step Xiantian.

Half-step Xiantian!

Lin Ming was excited. What would happen if he defeated this half-step Xiantian martial artist?

With the Purple Comet Spear in his hand, Lin Ming made a preemptive move. When the figure was still materializing, Lin Ming thrust towards its chest.

Clang!

Sparks scattered in the air. Lin Ming's spear had been blocked by the red person, and a wild true essence tore through the air. As the red person blocked the spear, it gripped its own spear with one hand and swept towards Lin Ming's neck.

Lin Ming instantly drew backwards, and the spear light erupted – 10,000 Flames Burning World!

Hu hu hu!

Wind and fire began to pick up within the chamber, and pillars of flame shot out like a blazing meteor. In that instant, the red martial artist had been completely surrounded by flames. But this red martial artist was agile. In this situation, it still managed to retreat as it stabbed out with its spear again, stabbing into the pillars of flame!

There were several dozen pillars of flame, but in the blink of an eye, they were all scattered by the red martial artist! However, as the last pillar of flame exploded into nothing, a purple arc of lightning lept out! This was the Divine Demon Steel Needle!

Lin Ming had hidden the Divine Demon Steel Needle within 10,000 Flames Burning World, taking the red person by surprise!

Pu!

With the speed of light, the Divine Demon Steel Needle pierced through the scarlet martial artist's neck, and a rain of dazzling light showered out! The red martial artist burst apart into a deluge of red sparkling lights.

If Lin Ming didn't use a sneak attack like this, he still would have been able to defeat the red martial artist. But, he would have needed to exert a great deal of effort.

The red light once again gathered onto Lin Ming, flowing into his body.

The pure fire true essence spread through all the meridians of Lin Ming's body before finally converging into his dantian where it settled down. After the half-step Xiantian martial artist had died, the fire origin energy it left behind was several times richer and purer than the red person that had come before it.

"This fire-attribute origin energy is extremely pure and dense. When it is gathered in my dantian, it can act like a seed and lay the foundation for me to break into the Houtian realm in the future."

As Lin Ming was secretly rejoicing in his fortune, he saw the red lights begin to condense again. This time, Lin Ming's heart went

cold. Without a doubt, the new red person that would emerge would be a Xiantian realm martial artist!

Lin Ming's expression was solemn. The difference between a half-step Xiantian and a true Xiantian master was enormous! Without hesitation, Lin Ming used the strength of Tempering Marrow. Instantly, the true essence that was contained within his marrow began to violently gush out, and Lin Ming's momentum shot up!

As the red person was forming, Lin Ming's figure flew forwards like the wind, the Purple Comet Spear piercing outwards.

Spear light shined, and the red person's figure suddenly distorted, completely avoiding Lin Ming's spear. The spear stabbed into the wall, causing the array formation on the wall to severely shake!

Sou!

The red person struck out with its long spear. With a sound like tigers and dragons roaring, a spear swept out at Lin Ming's waist.

Peng!

The red person's long spear collided with Lin Ming's Purple Comet Spear, causing the shaft to bend. Lin Ming withdrew, and the red person closely followed him, striking out with the long spear in its hand like a serpent. With every spear thrust, spear

light shined out, and the spear itself seemed to contain an intelligent will, making Lin Ming feel as if he were being overwhelmed by this barrage of attacks.

“What great spear skill!’ Lin Ming’s pupils contracted. The red person was only a puppet that was formed from energy, but he never thought it would have such skills in spearmanship. Lin Ming’s body began to emit popping sounds as he suddenly gave a loud shout; the phantom of an azure True Dragon appeared behind him.

“Roar!”

The cry of a True Dragon flushed into the sky. Lin Ming gripped his spear and swept out. With a nearly irresistible momentum, Lin Ming broke apart all of his enemy’s spear lights!

“Heretical God Force!”

Lin Ming didn’t plan on challenging the next opponent. Against a middle Xiantian realm martial artist, he had no confidence that he would win. It would be best to go all out and finish off the red person currently in front of him.

As the Heretical God Force opened, Lin Ming’s momentum dramatically spiked up once again. He didn’t have the exquisite and skillful spear skills that the red person had. What he could rely on to win was absolute subjugation by strength. With superior strength, he would break apart the red person’s skills!

Spear energy crashed in the same place, and suddenly a terrifying vortex of wind appeared in the completely airtight chamber. If a weaker martial artist was caught in this brutal vortex of wind, they would only meet a miserable death.

Ka ka ka!

The protective array formation on the walls began to fiercely shake!

The spear lights were broken apart by Lin Ming one at a time. As he swept out his spear, his attack contained the power of thunder and fire. But at this time, the red person suddenly moved, and he disappeared like smoke.

Without even looking, Lin Ming turned around and thrust out the Purple Comet Spear. On the edge of the spearhead, the Divine Demon Steel Needle roared out!

The red person lifted his spear to block. The Divine Demon Steel Needle struck above the red person's spear shaft along with the Purple Comet Spear.

Bang!

A violent explosion followed. The red person was sent flying backwards by the power of thunder, and brutally slammed into the protective array formation. A faint crack had even appeared in the spear that was formed by energy! This blurry spear was naturally

unable to compare with a top high-grade earth-step treasure like the Purple Comet Spear.

Lin Ming didn't let this opportunity pass. He rushed forwards, thrusting out. The power of thunder and fire intertwined; Thunderfire Annihilation!

Lin Ming only used 30% of his energy in this Thunderfire Annihilation. After all, this chamber was a completely enclosed space. If a full energy Thunderfire Annihilation had exploded within the chamber then Lin Ming himself might not have been much better off.

The red person didn't have any wisdom or thoughts. It only lifted its cracked spear to dodge this 30% Thunderfire Annihilation of Lin Ming's.

The result was unsurprising –

Bang!

The red person's spear was completely broken to pieces, and the confined space began to violently shake. In the following true essence shockwave from the attack, the red person's body was broken apart, turning into a dense group of red lights. As for Lin Ming, even he had been injured. His blood vitality was roiling, and his right hand was dripping wet with blood.

Hu!

The red person dispersed into a mass of red lights that merged into Lin Ming's body. This light was much richer than anything that came before; even the wound that Lin Ming had just received was beginning to regenerate at a visible speed.

The condensed true essence within his dantian strengthened once again, paving the way for Lin Ming to reach the Houtian realm. As long as Lin Ming was able to fill his dantian with true essence, he would naturally break through to the Houtian realm. He wouldn't even need to stop at the half-step Houtian realm.

“Just what sort of origin does this Ancient Phoenix Clan have, that it can construct such a wonderful and unbelievable smelting trial. No wonder Divine Phoenix Island considered this Divine Phoenix Mystic Realm the basis of their sect, and why so many core disciples struggle for a spot to enter the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall.

As the wounds of his body healed, Lin Ming began to think about how to challenge a middle Xiantian master's moves. He wanted to take a good look and see just how great the disparity was between him and a middle Xiantian master.

But to his surprise, a middle Xiantian realm red person didn't appear. Instead, the enclosed chamber suddenly quieted. As Lin Ming waited, nothing happened. He stood there puzzled, and as he was beginning to have some doubts, an icy voice rang out in the air. It was a language that Lin Ming had never heard of before, but seemed oddly familiar.

After a few words, Lin Ming's heart began to shake. This was...
the language of the Realm of the Gods?

Chapter 400 – Final General Level Smelting Trial

Lin Ming didn't have a comprehensive understanding of the Realm of the Gods' language from the memory fragments in his mind. He carefully recalled them, and was then just able to barely understand the meaning of the words.

“Talent is satisfactory for the general level requirement. You may continue onto the final general level smelting trial!”

Final general level smelting trial?

Lin Ming was shocked.

Who was speaking? This Ancient Phoenix Main Hall had existed for tens of thousands of years or even hundreds of thousands of years. Besides some Supreme Elders of the Realm of the Gods who had already thoroughly understood the profound mysteries and principles of life death, no one should be able to live this long. There shouldn't still be anyone living in the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall; was this a message left behind by the one who created all of this?

This was a indeed a possibility. Of course, there were also some magic array formations that could record sounds and preserve them for an extremely long time.

Just what was the final general level smelting trial?

A light shined down, enveloping Lin Ming. In the next moment, he suddenly felt like he was being warped somewhere else.

After several dozen breaths of time, Lin Ming slowly adapted to the strange and uncomfortable feeling of being spatially warped somewhere. As he slowly opened his eyes, he saw that he seemed to have been warped away from the Main Hall. Behind him was a cave, and in front of him was an endlessly vast plain. There were no giant glaciers and no rivers of lava, only black, sparse land with scattered rocks and some vegetation.

As Lin Ming looked closer, he could see that there were several broken swords, spears, and other weapons buried in the dirt. There were even incomplete skeletons. But after such a long time, these skeletons were brittle to the point of turning to dust if handled too roughly.

Lin Ming's mind stirred. He gingerly extracted several bones from the ground and compared them to a human's anatomy. He wasn't able to find any differences between them.

“The Ancient Phoenix Clan was from the human race of the Sky Spill Continent?”

Lin Ming couldn't help but wonder this.

At this moment, a mass of hazy flashing lights appeared in front of Lin Ming. A second later, it merged into a human's face, just like a ghost.

“Is this also an opponent formed from energy?” Lin Ming subconsciously took out the Purple Comet Spear, true essence circulating through his entire body as he prepared to fight at any moment.

However, what startled Lin Ming was that the human face opened its mouth and actually began to unbelievably speak. “Smelting trial...”

It sounded monotone and cold, without the slightest bit of emotion. The language that it spoke in was shockingly from the Realm of the Gods.

Lin Ming stared in complete confusion. Was this ghostly thing some sort of remnant spiritual body left behind?

But what sort of spiritual body could live so long? Had it been protecting the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall for the last tens of thousands of years, or even hundreds of thousands of years? It could live this long?

“Who are you?” Lin Ming asked. After he recalled the fragmented memories of the Supreme Elders from the Realm of the Gods, he managed to stitch the words together to compose this sentence. This was the first time he had used the cumbersome language of the Realm of the Gods, and his pronunciation was awkward. But, the ghost in front of him seemed to understand this.

“I am the Palace Spirit, the guardian of this land.”

“Palace Spirit? You’re already dead?” Lin Ming asked with a stunned expression. Within the Sky Spill Continent, things such as ghosts, vampires, and zombies weren’t anything new. In fact, there were even some martial artists that were able to separate their soul from their body, to the point where after they died their soul would become a completely separate ghostly martial artist that relied on swallowing the souls of others to cultivate.

“Dead? No, I’ve had this appearance since birth. I am part of the Spirit race. Or to be more accurate, I am of the Stone Spirit race.”

“Stone Spirit?” Lin Ming’s eyebrows arched up; this was the first time that he had heard of the existence of such a race.

“Rocks have souls, mountains have souls, the world has a soul. Once a rock has passed through countless years, it can nurture a ‘spirit’. This is my Stone Spirit race. My race’s life is as long as a rock itself. When we sleep, we slumber among the rocks and can rest for 100,000 years at a time. This is nothing unusual.”

Heavens!

Lin Ming was speechless. Life as long as a rock’s? How long could a rock last? If a rock was placed in a spot, if it didn’t crack or melt, it could weather almost eternity.

A single period of sleep could last 100,000 years. From the very beginning that this Ancient Phoenix Main Hall existed, this fellow could have been sleeping until now.

Lin Ming guessed that this fellow was the same sort as Yan Mo from the Sorcerer Holy Land. It was sent by its master to manage and watch over the smelting trial. Thus, he asked, “I would like to ask, what is the meaning of the final general level smelting trial?”

“The Ancient Phoenix Main Hall is the training grounds of the Ancient Phoenix Clan’s army. Altogether, there are a total of three levels. The king level, general level, and sergeant level. Your companions that followed you in and participated are currently in the sergeant level smelting trial. As for you, you are chosen for the general level smelting trial!”

Lin Ming’s mind was startled. He never imagined that this Ancient Phoenix Main Hall was a training ground for the Ancient Phoenix Race’s army! For this place to exist on such a massive scale, just what kind of army was being trained? What sort of war did they participate in?

The words sergeant level smelting trial meant that it trained soldiers. Thus, Mu Dingshan, Mu Xiaoqing, and the rest could only be considered ordinary soldiers. As for himself, he could be considered a general, or at least a military officer of some kind. And the so-called king? What rank was that?

Lin Ming couldn’t help but ask, “What kind of talent does a king level participant need?”

“A king level doesn’t just need talent, but more importantly needs the bloodline of the Ancient Phoenix Clan. Although you

have a small trace of a God Beast bloodline within you, it is not the same bloodline that my Ancient Phoenix Clan possesses.” The Palace Spirit said without a trace of emotion.

Lin Ming was shocked; the reverse scale blood within him had actually been noticed by this Palace Spirit. But, it wasn't strange. The level of understanding concerning God Beasts that this Ancient Phoenix Clan achieved naturally couldn't be compared with Divine Phoenix Island.

“What are the details of the final general level smelting trial? Will I die if I lose?”

“The content of the smelting trial is to fight an army. If you are defeated, you may retreat to this cave and try again. But, if you die within the smelting trial, you will truly die. Whether it is the sergeant or general level training trial, both need to undergo a baptism of blood in order to grow. Otherwise, it will be impossible to face the cruelty and brutality of the battlefield. After a period of time, I will return to assess your situation.”

“What is the time period? Is it seven days? What happens if I cannot complete the tasks of the smelting trial within seven days?” Lin Ming couldn't help but ask. He had heard from Mu Dingshan that the normal time period within the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall was seven days. But after listening to this Palace Spirit, it seemed it would be difficult to complete the general level smelting trial within that seven day time period.

“Seven days is only the period of time laid down within the sergeant level smelting trial. Within the general level smelting

trial, it will only end upon completion, or upon your death.”

“Until completion? How much time would that be?”

“The time required is different for every person. If it is a short time, then around two years. If it is a long time, then even 10 years is possible.”

“What!? Ten years!?” Lin Ming was beyond startled. He himself had only lived for 16 years, and had only cultivated for around four years. Yet this Palace Spirit had so casually tossed out a 10 year time period!

If he really cultivated for five or ten years here, just what sort of concept was that!

Lin Ming was left completely speechless. To practice here in this sealed off area for such a long time was absolutely no faster than cultivating outside and experiencing all sorts of other trials, let alone having to do so for such a long time. Maybe even Divine Phoenix Island would think that he had died here. Also, there were his parents that he had to consider; how would they feel if they thought he had died?

“I refuse!”

Lin Ming said without hesitation.

“I apologize, but I am only a messenger and do not have the

ability to change how the smelting trial is managed. The array formation has already started. Now, you have choice but to complete the smelting trial; it will not come to an end before you finish. But do not be so hasty in refusing. If you can complete the smelting trial, you will also receive rewards that you cannot imagine. The quicker you complete the smelting trial, the greater the rewards will be.

“What rewards?” Lin Ming couldn’t imagine any reward that would stir his heart and make up for several years of his life. But as he spoke, he suddenly remembered something and he began to run short of breath.

He remembered the story that Mu Fengxian had told him. Divine Phoenix Island used to be a small ordinary sect. But 3000 years ago, because of the rise of Silent Demon Emperor City, they had no choice but to depart for safer lands and relocate themselves within Divine Phoenix Island.

At that time, the founder of Divine Phoenix Island had happened upon an accidental lucky chance, and had entered the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall. There, she had simultaneously obtained both the bloodline of the Vermillion Bird Saint Beast and the Blue Luan Saint Beast. This was the sole reason that Divine Phoenix Island managed to attain 3000 years of glory!

The bloodline of the Vermillion Bird and Blue Luan Saint Beasts could be inherited by future generations. There were many descendants of the founder that had managed to inherit these bloodlines, and there were even descendants that cropped up every couple generations whose bloodline was not diluted. For instance,

Mu Qianyu and Mu Bingyun both had the bloodline of a Saint Beast within them, and this was because they had inherited it from the founder of Divine Phoenix Island!

Although Lin Ming had the Vermillion Bird blood essence within him, this was still acquiring the bloodline through forcibly transplanting it. And the transplantation technique was devised by Divine Phoenix Island – it wasn't necessarily some great technique.

With just a bit of Vermillion Bird blood essence, the bloodline within Lin Ming was very weak. But, if he could obtain the transplantation of these two bloodlines from the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, and increase his bloodline purity to the level of the Divine Phoenix Island founder, it would be a tremendous help in his cultivation of the 'Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle'!

"Blood of the Vermillion Bird! Blood of the Blue Luan! Are these rewards possible?" Lin Ming urgently asked.

"Not just the blood of the Vermillion Bird or the Blue Luan, but even the blood of the Ancient Phoenix is a possible. But, it is unable to be obtained by someone with your talent." The Palace Spirit blankly said, as if this was a statement of fact.

"Blood of the Ancient Phoenix!" Lin Ming's mind began to race and his heartbeat quickened, "What is the Ancient Phoenix? A Phoenix God Beast?"

This question may seem silly, but it was very important; there

was simply too much at stake. Naturally, Lin Ming had to have complete assurance in this.

“Of course.”

“What are the required conditions?” Lin Ming impatiently asked. He had thought that there would only be the Vermillion Bird and Blue Luan bloodline, he never imagined that he could obtain the blood of a Phoenix God Beast!

Even if it was only a tiny amount of the Ancient Phoenix, like an amount such as the reverse scale blood, it would still enough to give him a massive advantage!

If he had the bloodline of the Ancient Phoenix, what would cultivating the ‘Vermillion Bird Forbidden Divine Chronicle’ be like? Lin Ming simply couldn’t imagine it!

‘The blood of the Ancient Phoenix is usually a reward in the king level smelting trial. Normally, a general level talent would never be able to obtain it. There is one exception, and that is if you can complete the entire smelting trial within one year.’

One year!

Lin Ming took a deep breath. If he fully thought about everything the Palace Spirit had said so far, completing this smelting trial training in one year was a nearly inconceivable matter. But he still couldn’t help but ask, “From when you started guarding the

Ancient Phoenix Main Hall, how long has it been? Has there ever been a person who was able to complete the general level smelting trial within a year?”

“My deep sleep has lasted too long, I no longer remember the passage of time. But over the many years, there truly was a person who was able to complete the general level smelting trial in one year. However, he was from the lineage of the Royal Family – it was just that he was relegated to the general level.” The Palace Spirit’s voice was a bit slow. It was as if too much time had passed, and it could no longer clearly remember the events of the past.

“Since someone can do this, it means that I can too!” Lin Ming was confident in himself. This was an opportunity that he had to grasp with everything he had. Moreover, even if it wasn’t because of the blood of the Ancient Phoenix, Lin Ming still had to pass this trial as quickly as possible to leave the Ancient Phoenix Main Hall. According to normal circumstances, he should only be in here for seven days. If he was gone for too long, then Mu Qianyu would probably assume that he had died!